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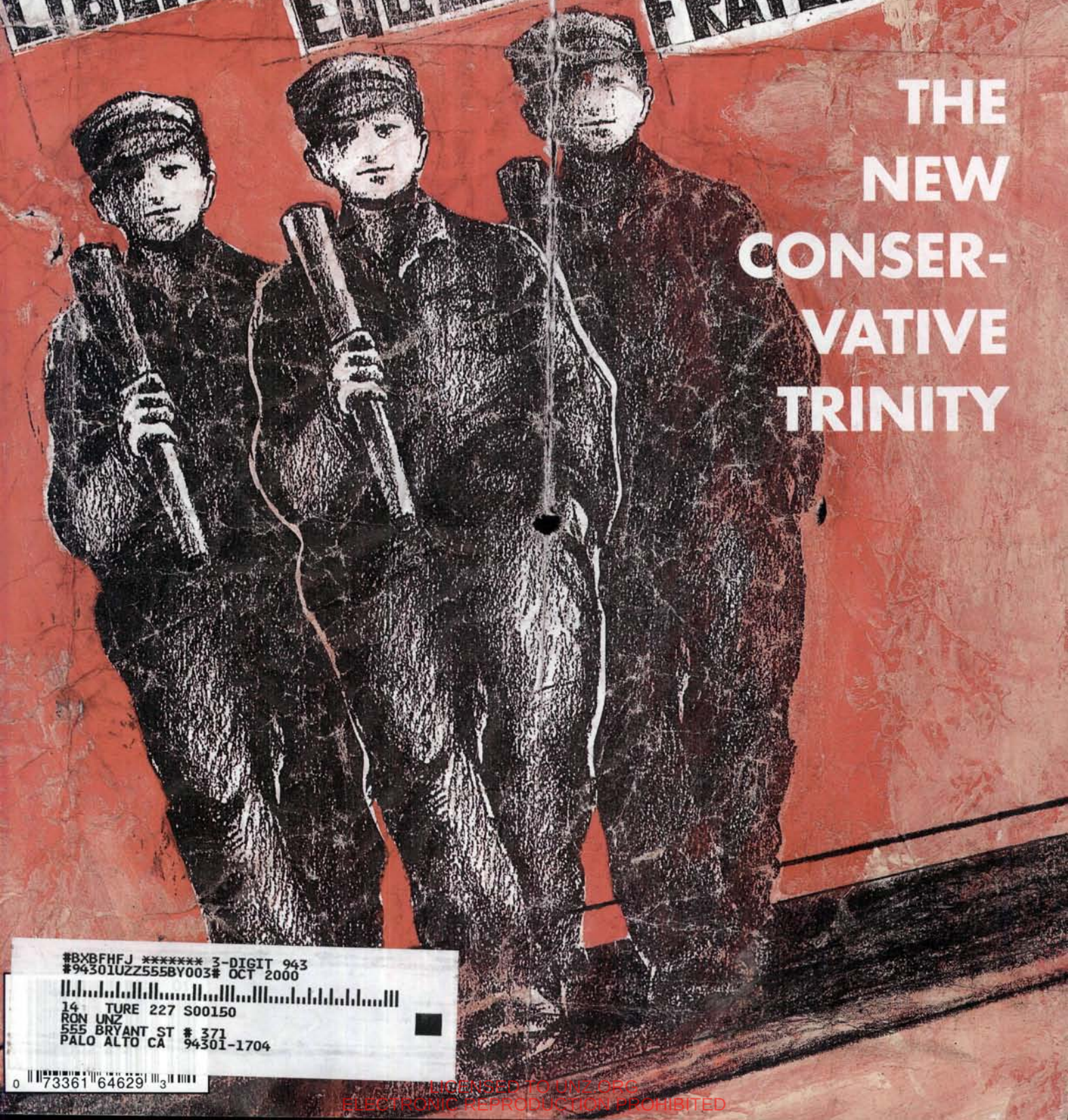

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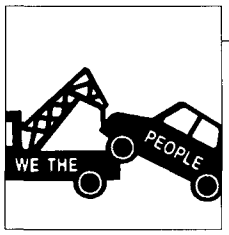

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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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On Evangelical Education

Douglas Wilson's article, "Why Evangelical Colleges Aren't," (*Vital Signs*, September) is provocative but unsubstantiated. It is also quietly self-serving, failing to mention his role as a founder of New St. Andrews College in Moscow, Idaho. His assertions about evangelical higher education ought to be measured against the facts of those colleges and against his own practice.

Mr. Wilson elaborates one central conclusion: Christian colleges today reflect rather than confront the dominant culture. His allegation is based on two undisputed facts: Such colleges teach a contemporary rather than a "classical" 17th-century curriculum, and they participate in the American system of regional accreditation. He believes Christian parents will find such institutions damaging to students. He asserts: "A graduate of an evangelical establishment like Wheaton has a far better chance of receiving a diploma in trendy leftism than his counterpart down the road at Leviathan State U."

"Trendy leftism"? Does Mr. Wilson mean the issues of poverty and suffering that Jesus addressed in proclaiming the Kingdom of God? The commitment that Jesus demonstrated to rebuke racism, hypocrisy, and a cold religious establishment? Jesus's attack on materialism? In any case, he does not cite the curriculum of any institution.

The issue of curriculum is central to Mr. Wilson's argument. He argues that the modern curriculum, with its subject-matter majors, replaces the "confessional approach to higher education." He comments, "When colleges ceased to pass on an inherited body of knowledge and began catering to the interests and desires of the public, the destruction was complete." Mr. Wilson seems to mean that issues such as human fallenness, man's need for salvation, the atoning work of Christ, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit ought to influence our understanding of humans and culture. I do not know an evangelical college where these truths are not kept before students in classes and in chapel.

Mr. Wilson's attack on an education system based on subject-matter majors such as English literature or mathematics prizes the traditional liberal arts but ignores 200 years of intellectual inquiry. It also dismisses the core of foundational general education courses that are required everywhere. Almost without exception, evangelical colleges require courses in biblical and theological study. Some mandate a progressive and deeper engagement with faith issues, and some may require a full major (45 semester hours) of Bible and theology together with a subject-matter major.

"Catering to the public"? If students were "customers," "always right," we could forget degree requirements. Our goal is to help students grow to intellectual, social, and spiritual maturity: Seniors should be different from freshmen in these areas. Students fail and are suspended and expelled precisely because they are not simply customers.

Mr. Wilson charges that "the *zeitgeist* [appears] in raunchy requirements for classes." While evangelical colleges often challenge students with difficult material, they usually do so in a context of guided discussion and critique. Yet Mr. Wilson's college offers a colloquium in literature featuring classic "raunchy" works without guidance, instructional support, or comment. Among them are Boccaccio's *Decameron*, the *Canterbury Tales*, Fielding's *Tom Jones*, Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, Byron's *Don Juan*, Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, and C.S. Lewis's *Till We Have Faces*. One accidental circumcision, two forced castrations, and a load of seduction and unchastity, one might note.

What "public" does New St. Andrews cater to? Its curriculum will familiarize students with a great deal of philosophy, theology, and culture up to 1870. Its subsequent selectivity omits any American literature later than Faulkner, any woman author after George Eliot, any laboratory science. One can master Latin and Greek, Calvin's *Institutes*, Dante and Milton, and return to an age when young white males studied dead white males.

Finally, Mr. Wilson equates regional accreditation with a state imprimatur. As he puts it, "Evangelical colleges have agreed to burn their incense to the emperor, and now regularly come before secular accrediting agencies and boards, hat in hand. 'Please, sir, may we teach

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some scratch 'n' sniff form of the Christian faith?'" But accreditation in America is granted without reference to the religious commitment of individual institutions. The North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, overseeing more than 900 colleges and universities in 19 states, has no statement regarding an institution's commitment to religious values. The colleges themselves in association have developed the general criteria for all schools. Individual colleges determine what their mission is; the NCA simply asks, "Do you have a mission? Are your programs consistent with your mission? Are you accomplishing your goals effectively? Is your college financially viable so you can continue to provide quality education? Do enough faculty work full-time for the college to meet the needs of your students? Do you have the library and other resources to support your programs?"

Is Mr. Wilson right that Christian colleges must "remain bland enough not to cross accrediting agencies with anything like a distinctively Christian view of the world"? That accusation won't stand at accredited, vibrantly Christian colleges like Tabor, Wheaton, Southern Nazarene, Dordt, Calvin, Northwestern, Taylor, Indiana Wesleyan, Malone, several Assemblies of God colleges, and the colleges of the Concordia University system.

Are evangelical colleges "proudly part of the establishment"? Not according to the American Association of University Professors, which is horrified that we will release faculty who don't adhere to doctrinal standards. All of the Christian colleges that Wilson names are explicitly committed to hiring only believing faculty.

One of Wilson's sharpest statements echoes Jesus's challenge to the self-praising Pharisees.

> The pecking order has been established, and those institutions which are hungry for academic respectability must respect the pecking order. This means that colleges which want accreditation must get their faculty from previously approved institutions, and must vow never to do anything which seriously challenges the existing order. They must determine to be the very model of kennel-fed Christianity.

Even Mr. Wilson's faculty at New St. Andrews are university trained, so this is specious. But maintain "the existing order"? Evangelical colleges often lead the Church and the professions. The first college I taught at has produced hundreds of pastors to challenge an almost moribund denomination, and hundreds of missionaries who serve across the world, winning people to Christ and building the national churches of those countries. From that college have come scores of evangelical Salvation Army officers, ministering to the poor and offering them the message of Jesus. The education department of that college, explicit in its Christian mission, was selected by the state as a model for teacher training because of its professionalism. Recently, Christian colleges have been intensely involved in the racial reconciliation movement, bringing the message of Christ to one of the most divisive national issues.

Mr. Wilson concludes, "Our only real hope is that the parents currently showing such zeal in the sound education of their younger children will not be too tired, when the time comes, to turn their attention to the establishment of small but genuine colleges." I actually agree with this self-seeking statement because I believe evangelical Christian colleges are "small but genuine," offering a quality education which establishes students in the faith.

But what will students gain from Mr. Wilson's New St. Andrews College? These "Bachelors of Arts in Liberal Arts and Culture" or "Bachelors of Arts with Emphasis in Christian Education" will know languages, classical theology and philosophy, and acquire a perspective on varying worldviews. They will know no history later than Jefferson's correspondence and the *Federalist*, no critique of modern culture or the political and social issues of the last hundred years. Asia? South America? Canada? Communism or Nazism? The missionary movement of the last 150 years? Racism? Invisible.

—*Richard J. Sherry*
Dean of Faculty Growth and Assessment
Bethel College
St. Paul, MN

Dr. Wilson Replies:

Dean Sherry has expressed his disagreements honestly and like a gentleman, straight up the middle. I thank him for it. But alas, there our agreement ends.

First, it would seem to me that the fact that I made no mention of my association with New St. Andrews College would indicate that I was trying to *avoid* the appearance of being self-serving. Had the article ended with, "For more information, please call the number in the by-line," the charge would perhaps have some plausibility. But now that I have been outed, I would argue that my involvement with a small college in the classical Protestant tradition appears to show me absolved of any taint of hypocrisy: We do try to practice what I was urging others to do in my article. And even now, under the most severe provocations, I resist the temptation to include an address or phone number.

With regard to "raunchy requirements," Dean Sherry charges us with inconsistency because of our use of portions of the *Decameron*, the *Canterbury Tales*, and other classic literature. He asserts, rather strangely, that we offer these works without "guidance, instructional support, or comment." But in fact, this is not the case, and in all our assignments we are very mindful of the purity St. Paul had in mind when he told us to "think on these things."

For the rest, while he is quite right in saying that my charges were general, numerous observers of evangelical colleges recognize the accuracy of the portrait I painted. As Dylan put it, you don't need to be a weatherman to tell which way the wind is blowing. But for those still desiring specific evidence of my charge that evangelical colleges reflect rather than confront the culture, they need look no further than Dean Sherry's comments. In his response, we find "dead white males" used as a pejorative phrase, "selection by the state as a model" considered to be a good thing and a sure mark of crackerjack professionalism, and an implicit charge of racism because he can find no evidence that we have joined the current secularist *jihad* against racism. Further, he sees a distinctively Christian view of the world in the denominational pandemonium represented by a long list of "vibrantly Christian colleges"—when what we should actually see there is the ecclesiastical precursor to the pluralistic bedlam that afflicts our culture now.

Finally, I do admit that I am university trained, but it is too late to do anything about it now.

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ELECTION DAY 1998 dawned as a November morning out of William Cullen Bryant, with "piercing winter frost, and winds, and darkened air." We walked to the firehall polling place, passing the pioneer cemetery, burial ground of veterans of the Revolution, all those Ebenezers and Ethans who cleared the land and endured Valley Forge so that we could depress a lever for Al D'Amato or Chuck Schumer. (In fact, the levers depress us.) Three days after Halloween, the tables are turned, for on Election Day, it is we who haunt the dead.

No entrails-slurping zombie out of *Night of the Living Dead* could be as repulsive as New York's Senate candidates, Al D'Amato and Chuck Schumer. In the small cities of upstate New York, where much of 20th-century history has been shaped by the conflict between Italians and non-Italians, D'Amato has been every Presbyterian lady's nightmare: a man of surpassing vulgarity; coarse, charmless, a bully who "can't take yes for an answer," as Bob Dole said before he lost his wit somewhere on K Street. The preternaturally obnoxious Brooklynite Schumer, on the same hand, exists solely on television, where he is apparently the creation of a nasty antisemitic scriptwriter. Easily the most vicious enemy of the Bill of Rights in the entire Congress, Schumer is loathed by his colleagues, but then as a venerable New York statesman once told me, "It is impossible to succeed in New York City politics without such stridency that it makes you repugnant to everybody else."

What has become of the promise of 1992, when Ross Perot and Jerry Brown and Pat Buchanan began to define a post-Cold War American populism that was hostile to centralized government, the Fortune 500, and managerial liberalism, and animated by a refreshing faith in town-meeting democracy, the liberty of ordinary people and small places, and an isolationist reluctance to make war upon foreigners? Brown won the mayoralty last year on an inspiring Oakland First! platform; Buchanan ought to be revving up for another run in 2000 (when was the last time the winner of the previous New Hampshire primary was not even included in public opinion polls?); but where—outside Minnesota and Governor-Elect Jesse "The Body" Ventura—are their reinforcements? On town councils and school boards, no doubt, which are being systematically stripped of any real power by bipartisan Reinventors of Government and Apostles of the New Paradigm and people who actually say "the next millennium" in conversation.

The two wings of the Incumbent Party have learned nothing from the sporadic voter revolts of the 1990's. Perot-Brown-Buchanan themes were absent from the TV and radio ads of candidates for federal office—and given our oversized congressional districts and such gargantuan states as California, the noisomely noisy airwaves are the successor to flesh-pressing and tub-thumping and the shaking of actual human hands.

One lesson of 1998 is that live wires get snipped. The gruesome Kentucky Senator Mitch McConnell and his National Republican Senatorial Committee withheld critical party funds from populist Washington Congresswoman Linda Smith in her loss to incumbent Patty Murray. What a shock: The mandarins of the Wall Street/Pentagon party prefer a Democratic cipher to a spunky woman who, at least on occasion, spoke harsh truths about the GOP's betrayal of small business and Middle America. (A feminist campaign consultant told me over drinks that Murray was "totally clueless; the most stupid senator I ever worked with.")

On the sunny side, what American heart was not gladdened by the strange and wonderful election of Jesse Ventura? Maine and Minnesota are now graced with independent governors; Paychex CEO Tom Golisano ran fairly well as an independent in the New York gubernatorial race. The Perotist vein remains rich, although to tap it, it helps to have a fortune or sculpted musculature. If only Arnold Schwarzenegger weren't a Kempie and a foreigner to boot. Does anybody know Lou Ferrigno's politics?

So another Election Day has come and gone, and it's back to business for the Incumbent Party: sending deracinated military men and women hither and thither to fight the enemy of the week (and the weak); engorging leviathan to fund whatever programs our pollsters-in-chief judge critical to "soccer moms" (and any mom who lets her son play soccer instead of baseball is no American); and torching the Bill of Rights in a great sacrifice to our sacred wars on drugs, Internet porn, hate speech, and the other bugaboos of our leaders, most of whom were once pot-smoking, *Penthouse* reading, race-joke-telling teenagers.

—*Bill Kauffman*

KOSOVO has become a latter-day Munich. Over the past decade, it has been stylish for advocates of American intervention in the Balkans to justify their trigger-happy meddling by invoking "Munich." The argument runs roughly like this: Unless the "international community" (i.e., the United States under the guise of the U.N. or NATO) acts resolutely to stop and punish "aggression," the culprits—most commonly Serbs—will be emboldened to continue with their transgressions, just as Chamberlain's appeasement of Hitler in Munich in 1938 only whet the latter's appetite and soon led to World War II. Secretary of State Albright, for one, is an avowed adherent of this view.

What occurred in the Balkans this past October, however, is far more reminiscent of what really happened in Munich six decades earlier, in October 1938. Then, as well as now, a small state was forced by the great powers to give up control over a sizable chunk of its territory inhabited by an uncompromising ethnic minority bent on secession. In 1938, Czechoslovakia had to choose between giving up Sudetenland, inhabited mainly by Germans, or being attacked by the Reich. For today's actors, read: Serbia, Kosovo, Albanians, and NATO. The agreement between Slobodan Milosevic and U.S. Ambassador-Designate to the United Nations Richard Holbrooke, signed in Belgrade last month, reminds us that "Munich" is not about "stopping aggression": It *is* aggression.

When Milosevic and Holbrooke get together and spend many hours on that famous sofa in the former's office, three things seem to follow. First of all, Serbian interests will be disregarded, Serbian territories given up, and Serbian inhabitants of those territories forced to flee. Secondly, the will of the Clinton

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administration will be imposed regardless of the proceedings: Holbrooke does not go to Milosevic to "negotiate" but to devise the precise mechanism for the application of a *fait accompli*. Last, but by no means least, Mr. Milosevic stays in power in his ever-shrinking domain with the tacit approval of his interlocutor, freer than ever to deal with his domestic detractors (especially the remaining independent media) as he deems fit.

The most important consequence of the October agreement is that Serbia has ceased to exist as an independent state. Kosovo has ceased to be *de facto* part of Serbia, and it is set to be detached *de jure* in the near future. Since the massive pullout of October 26-28, the remaining Yugoslav army and Serbian police units in Kosovo have been supervised from the air by NATO aircraft and on the ground by 2,000 foreign observers. Once a week, those security forces will have to submit reports about their activities. The observers will enjoy immunity. The law of the land will not apply to them, but the government in Belgrade will be responsible for their security. This makes them a tempting target for Albanian terrorists, who will be able to strike at anything and anyone with impunity—knowing that any Serbian attempt to strike back would be condemned by the "international community" as a violation of the agreement.

The agreement also allows officials of the Hague Tribunal to come to Kosovo to "investigate" alleged atrocities. The likely result of their deliberations is obvious from the fact that four-fifths of the indictments relating to the war in Bosnia and Croatia are against Serbs. The Tribunal is a political, not a judicial, institution, and its involvement has political objectives. It will accordingly treat Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) crimes against the Serbs, as well as Albanians' self-inflicted atrocities, as non-events. (Those who doubt this need only remember the Bosnian Muslims' stage-managed "bread line massacre" of 1992, the Markale marketplace "massacre" of 1994, etc.)

But the Tribunal's involvement is significant since the rest of Serbia is now also coming under its jurisdiction. If the authorities in Belgrade still claim that Kosovo is an integral part of Serbia—as they do—and yet allow foreign investigators and lawyers to do their thing there, they create a dangerous precedent. It may clear the way for an international force to burst into the Ministry of Defense in Belgrade in search of indicted persons or relevant documents. (The late Hapsburg Empire is having a belated laugh: The rejection of this same demand by the government of Serbia in July 1914 provided the pretext for the Austrian-Hungarian attack which ignited the Old Continent.) Slobodan Milosevic has succumbed to the demand that Serbia give up its independence.

In order to comply with U.N. Security Council Resolution 1199, Serbian security forces have withdrawn to such an extent that the KLA has had no problem reestablishing control in the areas it has lost since last spring, while spreading its brief to new territories. "We are seeing a lot of KLA coming back, particularly in areas where Serbian police were leaving. As long as they continue to observe the cease-fire . . . we have no concerns," declared Shaun Byrnes, chief U.S. monitor in the multinational Kosovo Diplomatic Observer Mission, on October 27.

The effect on the remaining 200,000 Serbs in the province is predictable. "Kosovo Serbs, bitterly accusing Milosevic of betrayal, threatened to abandon the province for good," according to Reuters. Their destiny is sealed: It will be the same as that of their compatriots in the Krajina, or in Sarajevo in the aftermath of another deal between Milosevic and Holbrooke, three years ago. Kosovo will be "*Serbenfrei*," but nobody will mind much in the outside world.

Once the remaining Serbian civilians are gone, the precise constitutional formula for Kosovo's eventual separation will become irrelevant. Current American strategy still envisages elevating Kosovo to the status of a federal republic in the rump Yugoslav federation, after next year's provincial elections. The province would thus be formally detached from Serbia, and after a "decent interval" (a few months, perhaps; a year at most) the Croatian-Bosnian scenario for secession would be duly applied: The assembly in Pristina will call a referendum on independence, with the result a foregone conclusion.

This "solution" will shake the Balkans. It will undermine the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), where the Albanians comprise up to a third of the total population (as opposed to one-fifth in Serbia). The U.S. government swears by FYROM and supports Skopje's policy of denying autonomy to *its* Albanians, but by enabling their cousins in Serbia to get full autonomy and paving the way for independence, the United States will unleash a revolution of rising expectations among Macedonia's Albanians that cannot be contained. The Hungarians in Rumania (who are more numerous than Serbia's Albanians) are bound to demand the same, as are the Russians in the Ukraine, and the Kurds in Turkey.

Leonid Brezhnev occupied Czechoslovakia in 1968 in accordance with the doctrine of "limited sovereignty" that applied, according to Moscow, to all members of the Warsaw Treaty. That doctrine is applied far more liberally by today's proponents of the New World Order. NATO has acted unilaterally in Serbia, outside its zone and in the absence of any threat to any of its members. It has threatened war, and explicitly stated that it needed no U.N. Security Council authorization to wage one. Its apologists claim that its threats have imposed a "solution." They have, of sorts. We have seen it all before, in Munich in 1938. It did not stop with the *Diktat* to the Czechs then, and it would be naive to believe that it will stop with the *Diktat* to the Serbs now.

—*Srdja Trifkovic*

"JOHN GLENN returns to space!" the headlines screamed, and I found myself screaming back, "I don't care!" I guess it's a generational thing: I wouldn't understand.

Why did so many people—especially children of the Baby Boom—care that this man, who has spent his entire life feeding out of the public trough (with a little dessert from Charles Keating), took one more joyride at our expense? Or rather: I can understand why they might *care* (after all, I care about this a great deal myself), but why were they so *happy* about it? Where were the conservative protests against the waste of taxpayers' dollars? Where were the liberal cries of elitism (after all, you don't see NASA offering rides to former astronauts who didn't go on to be U.S. senators)? Where were the Republican outcries against an obvious election-year ploy by a Democratic administration? Where, finally, were the omnipresent scientific experts, to point out that you can't test the effects of space travel on the elderly (or conduct any kind of experiment, for that matter) on a subject group of one? The silence was deafening: In space, no one can hear you scream.

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Those who had lived some portions of their lives before the advent of the Cold War and those of us who grew up in its closing throes seemed less likely to get worked up by John Glenn's "triumphant" return to space, and there's a reason: The space program screams "Cold War boondoggle." Its one justification was that the Soviets were doing it, and so we had to do it, too. (Tang and the freeze-dried ice cream that the Smithsonian sells in the gift shop at the National Air and Space Museum are only justifications *ex post facto*.) But now the Soviet Union is gone, and the Russians are "borrowing" money from us to continue their (mis)adventures in space.

A week or so before John Glenn's "heroic" return to space, a Chicago radio show host interviewed a spokesboopsie for NASA. (One of only six political appointees at the agency, she had previously worked for Vice President Gore.) In a display of true heroism, the host tried to get her to answer a simple question: Why have a space program at all? Well, she replied, we need it in order to build a permanent space station. But, the host persisted, why do we need a permanent space station? Well, obviously, in order to conduct long-term experiments in space. But why do we need to perform experiments in space? Because the technology that went into the Hubble Telescope is now being used to provide us with clearer mammograms. (Sorry, Tang, breast cancer is the new flavor of the month.) But if we needed that technology, couldn't it have been developed without a space program? Well, yes, but . . . So, the exasperated host concluded, isn't the real reason we go into space simply because it is there? Well, yes, of course, and isn't that exciting?

I called a friend and colleague whose latest book deals largely with the destruction visited on America by school consolidation, the Interstate Highway System, and a large standing army—all central projects of the Cold War—and asked him what he thought of John Glenn's "historic" return to space. Well, he demurred, I have a soft spot for the Mercury Seven astronauts. But that's the whole point: With the fall of the Soviet Empire, major mistakes such as the Hubble Telescope, and charges of mismanagement in the early 90's, NASA realized that its days were numbered, and it has been searching wildly about for a justification for its continued existence. It has finally found one: satisfying the nostalgic yearnings of Baby Boomers who long for a return to the familiar days of their youth. Cape Canaveral is our new circus, and we can look forward to a string of celebrity space flights that will beguile us with visions of a future straight out of *Star Trek*, while taking our minds off of the very real future that is dawning all around us, a future of national dissolution, economic collapse, barbarism, and the potential end of our civilization. It's a future that we're unwilling—and increasingly, unable—to face, which is why we'll gladly sit, glued to the TV, like so many democratic Neros, fiddling with our remote controls while the Fourth Rome burns.

—*Scott P. Richert*

CAMPAIGN 1998 was the dirtiest in recent memory. The bottom of the slime-pit was reached by Al D'Amato and Chuck Schumer, who got into a spitting contest to determine which was the sleaziest politician in the history of the U.S. Senate: Schumer won. Elsewhere, leftist Democrats pulled out all the stops, blaring the message: A GOP victory means more churches burned. In Illinois, the Senate race between Carol Moseley-Braun and Peter Fitzgerald was no exception. In the closing days of the campaign, Senator Moseley-Braun repeatedly denounced Fitzgerald for political extremism and for his relationship with an "avowed white racial supremacist."

The evidence? Fitzgerald supposedly attended an extremist political rally in Rockford that had been arranged by the president of The Rockford Institute who, so the story ran, was affiliated with a racist neo-Confederate organization called The League of the South. Every detail in this indictment is false, beginning with the fact that it was our executive vice president, Chris Check, who organized both Rallies for Rockford and not the infamous "racial supremacist" denounced by Carol. Even though reporters from Channel 7 in Chicago and the *Chicago Tribune*, after interviewing me, concluded that there was no story, they did not hesitate to "print the legend," especially when master race-baiter Jesse Jackson and family-values advocate Hillary Rodham Clinton came to town to repeat the charges.

I was not surprised when the *Tribune* did not publish my response. The *Tribune* has had an ax to grind against *Chronicles* ever since we exposed the paper's extreme liberalism: The then-editor and later board chairman was angry enough to write me to complain personally. Since no one else in the Chicago media appears to take much interest in questions of fact, I have to waste space in *Chronicles* on this trivial issue, if only to go on record.

First, my relations with the Republican candidate, Peter Fitzgerald. I have never supported Mr. Fitzgerald and did not vote for him. I met him on one occasion only, when he came to my office seeking my support. We disagreed on virtually everything, and I told him candidly that it was free-trade and open-borders globalists like him who were alienating the blue-collar workers and Reagan Democrats that represented the real future of his party.

Moseley-Braun misrepresented the facts in saying that I was in any way associated with Fitzgerald. But Fitzgerald, when asked about the charges, knowingly lied in denying that he had ever met me. Even a glad-handing politician would remember the hour and a half he spent in someone's office in the presence of several witnesses. The campaign worker who brought him to see me certainly remembers and has said so on the record.

Second, there is the Rally for Rockford. It was a public forum to discuss judicial taxation, not a protest against desegregation. A senatorial candidate could hardly be faulted for going to an open forum attended by nearly 700 public-spirited voters. The only trouble is that Fitzgerald, after promising to come, turned out to be the little man who wasn't there, but this did not stop the abuse. One of Fitzgerald's campaign workers (who later got shafted by the candidate) handed out literature outside the lecture hall.

As Carol's numbers rose, Fitzgerald gave into pressure to "renounce" (read: "denounce") the president of The Rockford Institute, and he declared that he would never have had anything to do with me if he had known of my connections with The League of the South. Of course, his campaign staff *did* know—well before the rally—because my association with the League was publicized in the Rockford paper. This knowledge did not prevent one of his staffers from showing up at my office, with another candidate in tow, a good seven months after the local Gannett paper devoted two front-page stories to the League (and less

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than a month before Fitzgerald's renunciation). Some of our friends are very angry with Fitzgerald, but what did they expect of politicians? Although Moseley-Braun was regarded as doomed from the beginning, the amazing thing is that Fitzgerald's cowardice and ineptitude very nearly snatched defeat out of the jaws of victory.

Third, there is The League of the South, an organization of Southern writers and scholars that should be well known to our readers. The League has received favorable treatment from the *London Times* and the BBC, and it was praised by columnist George Will—oh, but then, Moseley-Brown called Will a racist, too. The League was the sum-total of the evidence offered by Carol, Jesse, and Hillary.

I didn't expect fair treatment from a leftist politician in a desperate bid to save her sinking career, and I was naive enough to hope that a self-described conservative would check a few facts before denouncing me. But if Moseley-Braun imitated Johnny Cochran in playing the "race card," Peter Fitzgerald took Bill Clinton as his model, first denying he knew me, then claiming he had forgotten, but never thinking twice about damaging the reputation of an innocent man. When he goes to Washington, to join what Mark Twain called "the best Congress money can buy," Fitzgerald will fit right in.

—*Thomas Fleming*

EPICYCLES:

• Politics as Usual: Election Day brought the expected result in the **Illinois gubernatorial race**, if not the one for which many conservatives had hoped (see "Letter From Chicago," December). Republican Secretary of State George Ryan clawed his way to the top over Democratic Congressman Glenn Poshard, although the margin of victory, four percentage points, was much smaller than the polls had indicated. Ryan was undoubtedly aided by the denial of ballot access to James Tobin, the Libertarian Party's candidate for governor. Tobin, a long-time political foe of Ryan, appeared with Glenn Poshard in the final days of the campaign, and he believes that his presence on the ballot could have swung the election to the far more conservative Poshard. But even after ballot access was denied to Tobin, Ryan took no chances. The weekend before the election, his campaign distributed flyers featuring a picture of Poshard standing next to a man carrying a sign that read "Guns = Freedom. Vote Poshard." Poshard claimed that the picture, snapped at a campaign event during the summer, was a set-up by the Ryan campaign, a charge that Ryan—while given ample opportunity—did not deny.

The biggest news in the final days of the campaign, however, was the story that didn't make it into the press. On Monday, November 2, federal prosecutors filed sealed charges against two current and three former employees of a suburban Chicago secretary of state facility. The charges alleged that the employees had traded commercial driver's licenses for bribes. Some of the money—as Ryan himself has acknowledged—ended up in Ryan's campaign coffers, and the Associated Press reports that prosecutors claim that the bribery scheme was driven by the "pressure managers felt to raise money for Ryan." The charges, however, remained under seal until two days after the election; according to the AP, "federal prosecutors felt it would generate publicity in the final moments of the gubernatorial campaign." In other words, federal prosecutors deliberately kept important information from the voters because of the possibility that it could change the result of the election. So much for the ideal of the "well-informed voter."

• A Strong Defense: The days of $600 hammers and $2,500 toilet seats may be gone (or perhaps we just don't hear about them anymore), but the big spenders at the Pentagon continue to rise to the occasion. In October, the Associated Press reported that the Pentagon will spend as much as $50 million next year to provide **Viagra** to American troops and military retirees. The Pentagon calls the expense "unexpected," but a more appropriate word might be "surprising," for at least two reasons: First, is it really a good idea to provide Viagra to men in our sexually mixed, scandal-ridden armed forces? And second, why are men who need Viagra being recruited in the first place?

OBITER DICTA: For the second month in a row, *Chronicles* is debuting a new feature. *Signs of the Times*, a two-page monthly column found between the *Views* and *Opinions*, will discuss "All the News Unfit to Print." *Signs* will examine major news stories from the foreign press that received little or no coverage in America. Weaving excerpts with commentary, the anonymous columnist will address the question: What is the advantage of America's constitutional guarantee of the "freedom of the press" if those who own the presses choose not to print important stories?

We're pleased to announce that *Chronicles*' readers can now pay for all of our back issues, books, and Regnery Lectures audiotapes with a Visa or MasterCard (as well as with a check or money order). Please see our new standardized order form on the inside front cover for details. And remember to check the order form in each issue; the products offered will change every month.

The latest book by *Chronicles*' corresponding editor **Bill Kauffman** is now available. *With Good Intentions? Reflections on the Myth of Progress is America*, released by Praeger Publishers, can be found at the finest chain bookstores everywhere, courtesy of the Interstate Highway System. Several chapters of the book previously appeared in the former Rockford Institute publication, *The Family in America*.

Chronicles features two poets this month. **John Nixon, Jr.**, a Bellaman Award winner from Fork Union, Virginia, was co-editor of the *Lyric* for 16 years. His poetry has appeared in, among others, the *New Yorker*, *America*, *Christian Century*, the *New York Times*, and the *Georgia Review*.

Our second poet is **Alan Sullivan**. A novelist from North Dakota who turned to poetry a few years ago, Mr. Sullivan's work has appeared in many journals in the United States and the United Kingdom, including *Poetry*, the *Dark Horse*, and the *Spectator* of London.

Our art this month flows from the creative hands of **Igor Kopelnitsky**, a Russian artist living in Brooklyn. Since coming to the United States in 1990, Mr. Kopelnitsky has provided artwork for the *New York Times*, the *Daily News*, and the *Washington Post*, as well as *Chronicles*.

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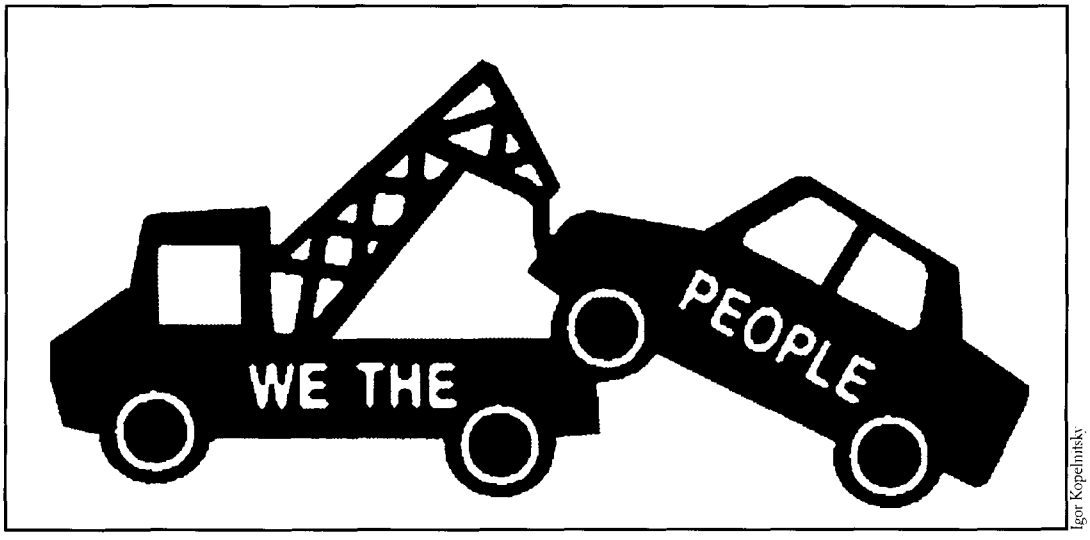

Igor Kopelnitsky

Turn to the Dark Side

by Thomas Fleming

As members of the House of Representatives were moving toward impeachment hearings that should make Bill Clinton—whatever the outcome—one of the most infamous politicians in American history, Republicans in both houses of Congress decided to give the President everything he was asking for—more federally funded teachers to corrupt the children and $18 billion of boodle for the IMF, justified by a blustering Dick Armey as a victory: From now on, the better-funded IMF will have to do its dirty deeds in public! The Republicans also gave presidential hit-man Richard Holbrooke a free hand both to expel the beleaguered remnant of Christians in Kosovo and to saddle the rest of the Serbs with a dictator they do not want.

Worst of all, perhaps, is the Department of Health and Human Services plan—supported, apparently, by Henry Hyde—to set up a national computerized network to track down parents who do not make court-ordered child support payments. Like so many other national-socialist schemes, the crusade against dead-beat dads is a gift of the "family values" conservatives who can justify any government outrage so long as it is "for the children."

Republicans thought that by playing the impeachment card they would ensure the return of even more Republicans to Congress—an exercise in strategic brilliance that cost Newt Gingrich the speakership. But since the conservative freshmen are unlikely to turn out any better than the classes of 1996 and 1994, rank-and-file conservative voters cannot be blamed for sitting this one out, helping to make this the lowest turn-out in 40 years. Some conservatives here in Illinois could not even make up their minds to vote against Carol Moseley-Braun. Allegedly venal, self-evidently stupid, and blatantly leftist, the nation's first black female senator does her best to stick by her principles and represent the leftists and minority groups who voted for her.

The same cannot be said of a single Republican who ran for a major office in this state. In the Senate race, Republican Peter Fitzgerald, who learned how to "moderate" his defense of Second Amendment rights, gained the endorsement of the *Chicago Tribune*. Gubernatorial candidate George Ryan, when he was not defending his record as the secretary of state whose employees sold commercial driver's licenses to unqualified aliens, attacked his Democratic opponent for not supporting gun control. Until recently, Ryan was considered a pawn of the NRA, but whatever the issue, the motto of Illinois Republicans is "Retreat from the sound of the guns."

Think back, my loyal conservative friends, and try to recall a conservative candidate for national office who kept his major campaign promises after the election, who did not become suddenly respectable once he saw the lay of the land. Robert Taft is not an acceptable answer: He died before there was a conservative movement. What is the point of putting Republicans in office, even self-declared conservatives, if they are going to behave like leftists? Not moderates, not liberals, but leftists. The answer given by the good men who continue to support the GOP usually rings the changes on "Politics is the art of compromise" and "Rome wasn't built in a day" and "We just have to get more conservatives on the Supreme Court." To answer a cliché with a cliché: "We're going to hell in a handbasket, and the conservatives are selling us fans. And the fans are made in China. And they don't work."

"But free trade, open borders, and the New International Order," goes the reply, "are all clauses in the new conservative creed." Pat Buchanan's friends insist that this new conservative internationalism is, at best, the result of a misunderstanding or, at worst, the product of a conspiracy to take over the right. I am not at all sure that this is a debate worth carrying on. Who is and who is not a "conservative" is one of those conversational topics that should have been exhausted some time before 1984, and a recent article by Andrew Sullivan makes it clear that in the war of words, leftists have won the copyright to the name

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"conservative."

In the course of his article, the ex-British former editor of the *New Republic* names two groups: establishment Republicans like Trent Lott, Kenneth Starr, and Representative Bob Inglis, and the usual second generation neoconservatives—Bill Kristol, David Frum, and Mark Helprin. Is Mr. Sullivan seriously asking us to believe that these movement leaders actually are committed to a set of identifiably conservative principles? The most important "conservatives" today are political operators who combine the probity of Warren Harding with the tactical brilliance of Harold Stassen. They can be very good at raising money and taking orders—whether from an Australian media magnate or from Asian business interests—but since nothing distinguishes their fundamental principles from those of, say, Andrew Sullivan, these representatives of the respectable right are of no earthly use except to provide an acceptable shadow opposition to the democratic socialists who call themselves "liberals."

What would America be like if the editors of the *Weekly Standard* joined forces with the leadership of the GOP and captured the White House and both houses of Congress? There is no need to wonder, because it would be exactly like the America we are living in today. The only reason Bill Clinton can steal the conservatives' thunder is because that thunder is played on a piccolo, and the tune is what the Pied Piper of Hamelin played, a song guaranteed to attract every rat in the country: Wall Street greed tempered with a Swedish socialism, multinational imperialism abroad sugar-coated with appeals to "Peace on Earth" (for the one-world liberals) and with invocations of Teddy Roosevelt for the rubes back in Iowa.

Suppose—or rather imagine—that a coalition of right-wingers captured the Republican Party and took over the two elective branches of government. How would they deal with the business that confronted the 105th Congress in its final days? Obviously, President Buchanan would not always have an easy time of it, crafting compromises with House Speaker Ron Paul and Senate Majority Leader Bob Smith. It would have taken weeks to work out the "Ron Paul Tax Reduction Act" cutting income taxes by half, eliminating withholding, and requiring a simple, one-page tax form.

For the first time in years, Cabinet meetings are spent discussing policy instead of crafting carefully worded statements that defend the President without implicating Cabinet members as accessories. (The Clinton Cabinet was a highly exclusive group that excluded anyone smart enough to know that Bill was a chronic philanderer.)

One fine spring day in the first year of his term, President Buchanan summons his Cabinet to discuss the Kosovo question. Secretary of State Trifkovic (the job is, after all, reserved for foreigners) explains (objectively, of course) the continuing threat posed by the Albanian terrorists that Clinton had installed while the United States were still part of NATO. The new CIA director, a legendary intelligence expert known only as the Admirable H., outlines the elaborate heroin connection funding the terrorists, but the new secretary of war recommends against the use of American boys—kicking the women out of the armed forces was his first official act—in the Balkans. "All we need to do," urges Secretary Trifkovic, "is to show a little moral support to our good friend, President Kostunica, who is a little distracted with the trial of Mr. and Mrs. Milosevic."

The subject changes to domestic policy, and when Commerce Secretary Traficant mentions federal programs designed to build more schools and hire more teachers, HEW Secretary Howard Phillips snorts with contempt: "In four years there won't be any federal spending on education, and I'll be out of a job and have to run for president."

> Think back, my loyal conservative friends, and try to recall a conservative candidate for national office who kept his major campaign promises after the election.

Now that Clinton's name has been dropped into the conversation—like a truckload of manure dumped on the White House lawn—FBI Director Kauffman presents his full report on the Clintons' abuse of civil liberties, including the deprivation of the civil rights of several of their closest associates. (This class of crimes was not covered in the immunity granted by President Gore before his own impeachment.) President Buchanan laughs: "We're so busy cleaning out the stables, we don't have time to chase that horse thief." Besides, as he points out to Kauffman, "It'll be hard to pin anything on any private citizen, now that the FBI has shut down most of its domestic surveillance."

Taking advantage of the break in the agenda, Secretary Phillips brings up ex-Congressman Hyde's plan to track down dead-beat dads. Attorney General Stephen Presser takes a few moments to provide a refresher course on American federalism, explaining that the federal government has no authority to enforce child support. It is not just the fact that regulation of marriage and the family are not mentioned in the Constitution—neither are nuclear weapons or Colombian cocaine, but a good case can be made that both fall under the jurisdiction of the national government. But the essence of a truly federal system, the attorney general goes on, is respect for the boundaries that separate higher from lower authorities. In principle, each level of society, from the family up to the nation, should have the power to regulate its internal affairs. The separate states have always had different laws on marriage, divorce, and child protection because the states were always sovereign in those matters. The only inference to draw from the Hyde plan is that marriage and the family are now national institutions.

"Even the states," adds an advisor of a somewhat sinister aspect, "are limited by nature in how far they can go in regulating marriage, procreation, and child-rearing. I know that it is fashionable these days to talk about family values, and we even used some of that language in the primaries, when we took what little wind there was out of the sails of Gary Bauer and Alan Keyes. But the fact is that 'family values' are simply another pretext to interfere in private life, and the end result will be to destroy, not preserve, the family.

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"Many unwed mothers are living with the consequences of their own bad judgment and immoral character, but suppose the extreme case of a decent woman who is victimized by a man that no one could have dreamed would be anything but a model husband. Even in that case, a morally responsible woman would refuse to socialize her problem. This is what families exist for, after all. As Robert Frost put it, 'Home is where when you have to go there they have to take you in.'"

By this time, some of the more hard-boiled officials are growing impatient. Interior Secretary Samuel Francis (the job has been redefined) lights a fresh Pall Mall on the stub of a dying cigarette and exchanges glances with BATF Director Pratt. Their plan to re-arm the citizenry through the "Assault Rifle Voucher Program" has restored peace in large sections of the American heartland, and—as INS Director Brimelow notes—"The Texas militias are doing a better job of policing the border than the INS ever did." FBI Director Kauffman breaks in to point out that the termination of all welfare benefits for aliens has reversed the immigration flow from Mexico, adding that old Latino families were never a problem. "Their families have been here a lot longer than yours, Peter, and they have every right to hold onto their language and culture—so long as the rest of us are not made to pay for it."

And so it went, a typical Cabinet meeting in the restored American republic. Previous meetings had discussed ways of restoring religious liberty and other constitutional freedoms to the states and to the people, a compromise bill on abortion that sent the issue back to the states (where it always belonged), and a conference of governors and state legislators to discuss the "Alabama Model" of community rights, giving home rule to cities and even to neighborhood groups that chose to exercise that option.

Not everyone was happy, of course, especially the so-called conservatives. Now that foreign lobbying was a treasonable offense, many conservative leaders had gone to Korea and Taiwan to work in tennis shoe factories and give lectures on the theory of democratic capitalism. Devolution also imposed a heavy burden of responsibility on an American people that had grown used to servility, and President Buchanan was sometimes tempted to impose penalties on states and cities that refused to exercise their rights—but the temptation passed as soon as he remembered he had given up the power to interfere.

Turning abortion back to the states had certain unforeseen consequences. As predicted, states like South Carolina and Utah passed very strict laws, while Massachusetts opted for a system of free abortions on demand and handed out an annual award to the doctor who had killed the most babies. Most states, however, were somewhere in the middle, outlawing all abortions that could not be justified on the grounds of incest, rape, or the mother's health. As abortion was increasingly stigmatized even in moderate states, liberals began moving to Massachusetts, which became increasingly radical. Governor-for-Life John-John took the inevitable step of declaring the Bay State an independent country and made the appropriately symbolic gesture of naming Barney Frank as his First Lady. Connecticut and Vermont breathed a sigh of relief and voted to expel all residents born in Massachusetts except on the off-chance that they could find a hundred natives who would testify to the aliens' good character.

Now that commercial regulation was back in the hands of states and local communities, multinational companies found it more difficult to destroy local businesses. A resurgence of mom-and-pop groceries and restaurants led to the revitalization of American cuisine. Suddenly, provincialism became all the rage, and Harvard-educated traitors to the South or the Midwest moved back home and took classes in order to recover the local accent they had worked so hard to lose. Even local televi-

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sion and radio stations, liberated from the shackles of national regulation and the international economy, became focal points for a cultural renaissance. Top 40 stations in Milwaukee and Austin and Toledo devoted half their time to local bands, and in Minneapolis, Albuquerque, and Tupelo, TV soap operas and comedies with local settings were the training ground for the dramatic explosion that would make the early 21st century a second Elizabethan era.

After four years of renewal under Buchanan, the forces of reaction regrouped in "The Real Conservative Party," led by a deflated William Bennett and former Democratic leaders like Tom Daschle and David Bonior. (Dick Gephardt had read the writing on the wall and jumped on the Buchanan band-wagon in the second year of his first term.) Promising a restoration of Democratic values—quotas (now termed "equality adjustments"), welfare-dependency, and race war—they swept several urban areas of the Northeast and almost split the black vote with Buchanan. A slim majority of African-Americans, however, followed the advice of leaders like Louis Farrakhan, who pointed out that the Buchanan administration had given them home rule in their own communities, the right to rear their children the way they wanted, and the ability to use their tax money to support their own religious schools and African Cultural Centers. "If you want to go back to being slaves, move to Massachusetts."

"Then I awoke and found the dawn was grey."

Restoration of America is a dream, but it is not an impossible or futile dream. It will have to be based both on our own history of self-reliance and provincialism—traditions that antedate the Constitution, which strengthened and preserved them for as long as that Constitution was respected—and on the deeper instincts of our human nature that found expression, for almost 3,000 years, in the institutions of European civilization.

These institutions incorporate that moral philosophy of Christianity and Judaism which is deeply offensive to Mr. Sullivan and the future First Lady of Massachusetts. In his article, Mr. Sullivan admonishes his neoconservative "think-alike" friends to regain their chipper optimism by taking inspiration—as "true conservatives" must—from the examples of Mark McGwire and Sammy Sosa—as if the American obsession with commercial sports were not a symptom of our malaise. But if, he says, they persist in their moralizing follies, "then they lose sight of what makes them both conservative and quintessentially American. They lose sight of what distinguishes them from the darker history of European conservatism. . . ."

It is the mark of dishonest leftists that they can never be content with defining their own position but must define their opponents' as well. Consider the effrontery of an Englishman telling us what it means to be American and a leftist instructing us on the principles of true conservatism. Next, he will be telling us that reverence for AIDS is the ultimate Christian principle.

By turning to "the dark side," American conservatives might rediscover the facts of human nature and the limitations they place on our sexual and social experimentation; they would recover a sense of the history and literature of which they have been deprived in the propaganda academies that pass for schools; they would regain pride in their ancestry and faith in their God; and they would refuse to listen to the Muzak melodies warbled by the Sirens—leftists in drag who define the American right.

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DICTATIONS

"Or Else a Little Conservative"

The words *conservative* and *conservatism* have been the subject of an ideological struggle that resembles the tussle over Patroclus' corpse described in the *Iliad*—as violent as it is futile: Both words are dead. Originally, conservatives were supporters of the establishment who did not like to be called Tories—a more full-blooded term. By the 1830's, there were no real Jacobites to restore a non-existent pretender, and conservatives were out to preserve the fruits of a revolution that had made the fortunes of so many powerful families.

In America, "conservative" was applied to defenders of the *status quo*, which by the 20th century meant plutocracy. Franklin Roosevelt could be accused of conservatism because he always worked for the interest of his own class, while Albert Jay Nock and H.L. Mencken rejected the label because it meant little more than "shill for the rich."

For a brief period, roughly between the end of the Korean War and the election of Ronald Reagan, "conservatism" implied a chaotic set of principles that included individual liberty, private property, respect for civilized order, and morality, but by the mid-80's, the term was legitimately applied to the defenders of a *status quo* represented by multinational corporations and the national bureaucracy.

The usual alternative to "conservatism" is "the right," which originally denoted the more tepid supporters of red revolution in France. Both terms have always represented the more moderate version of the revolutionary movements that find their fullest expression in Leninist Russia and the New Deal.

Marxists know what they are for; conservatives, typically, only know what they are against—sort of, because when "what they are against" becomes the *status quo*, then they are for it, at least up to the point where it might have tax consequences.

The only real alternative to "conservatism" would be a term like "Christendom" that stood for something positive and enduring, but that would mean taking a stand, like Martin Luther or Thomas More or Charles A. Lindbergh, and taking a stand can entail unpleasant consequences. It is much nicer and much safer to be either a little liberal or else a little conservative.

—Humpty Dumpty

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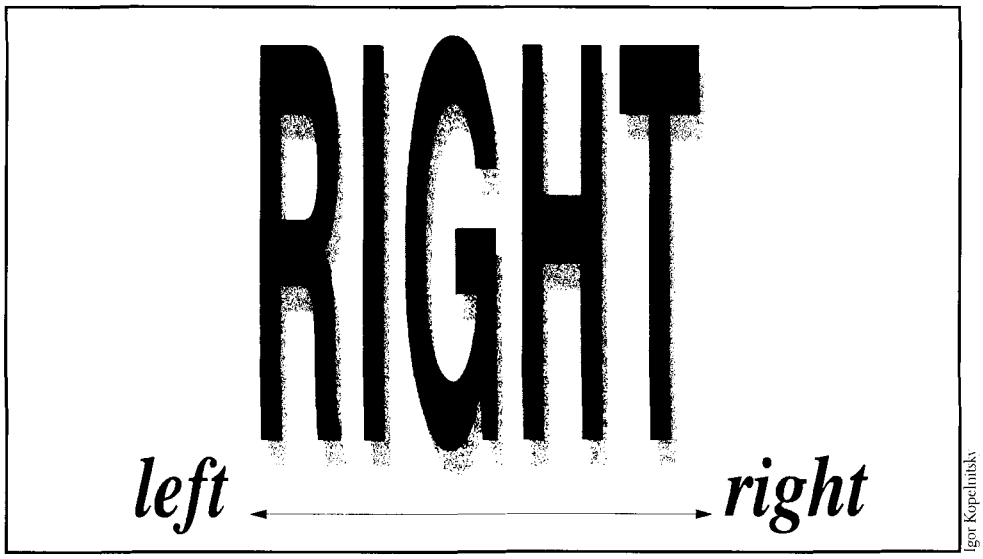
Conservative or Rightist?

A Personal Confession

by Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn



Igor Kopelnitsky

People who know me realize that in the United States I move largely in conservative circles. I write for conservative publishers and periodicals and lecture largely to conservative audiences. I feel at home with them and usually share their views. The vast majority of my friends in America consider themselves to be conservatives, and thus I am treated as one on the grounds of "guilt by association." But, though you can find me in the *Lexikon des Konservatismus*, I have never called myself a conservative. (In that book, you can also find Friedrich von Hayek, Ludwig von Mises, and Wilhelm Roepke, which shows that in Europe, conservatives and liberals are very close neighbors and not really opposites.)

I candidly call myself a rationalist, an arch-liberal, an extreme rightist, and a devout Catholic. A few Europeans, and certainly most Americans, will raise their eyebrows or shake their heads. Of course, we are talking primarily about *labels*. All too often, we do not understand each other when talking across the Atlantic. While Europe is a peninsula of Asia, North America is a gigantic island which inherited its ideas and ideals from a much smaller cluster of islands, whose inhabitants are very reluctant Europeans. No wonder that identical words often have different meanings on either side of the Channel or of the Atlantic.

My religion makes me a rationalist. Modern rationalism is a grandchild of scholasticism, which was profoundly influenced by Aristotle. I am, moreover, a liberal. Worldwide, genuine liberals are not necessarily of the same opinion, yet one thing is certain: What is called liberalism today in America has nothing to do with liberalism elsewhere. All genuine liberals are dedicated to personal freedom and reject the family-replacing provider-state, wrongly called the "welfare state." How did it happen that the term "liberal" was so totally perverted in America? Probably because genuine liberalism tries to be open-minded (which, while maintaining a critical sense, we all have to be). The "House of Liberalism" with its open windows and open doors became a victim of the howling storms sweeping through its rooms. And these winds had a distinctly leftist character. So "liberalism" in America became the very opposite of what it is elsewhere and totally at variance with "conservatism." In Europe, a liberal is like an American conservative, and liberals more often than not cooperate with conservatives. The Italian liberals sit, naturally, on the right side of the Chamber, to the right of the *Democristiani*, and I write occasionally for *Stanczyk*, a Polish review of "conservative-liberal monarchists."

The liberal ideal is "personalistic" and therefore compatible with Christianity. *Eleutheria*, freedom, figures in the New Testament, while *isotes* (in the sense of equality) does not. Men and women are not only obviously unequal physically, intellectually, and morally, but are also certainly not "equal before God." If Judas and St. John the Baptist are "equal before God," then Christianity should close up shop and the Day of Judgment should be changed into a hootenanny. R.L. Bruckberg-

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er, O.P., rightly calls the New Testament a message of absolute human inequality.

All truly great liberal thinkers have openly or secretly rejected democracy. On the other hand, the masses in liberal democracies usually cannot distinguish between liberty and equality. Illiberal acts can be very democratic, in the sense of being approved by majorities, and freedoms can be resented (or prohibited) by majorities. A rightist using his brain cannot possibly stand for democracy except in small villages where the people know each other and are faced by very simple administrative problems. Even Rousseau admitted in his *Contrat Social* that democracy is feasible only among angels or, in another passage, in tiny areas. Democracy is unacceptable to the rightist, who realizes that the voters and those voted into power must understand history, geography, politics, law, sociology, military affairs, and economics to have a moral right to be politically active and decisive. (Think about the knowledge, skill, and experience a surgeon must have to assume responsibility over the lives of hundreds of people, while mere amateur politicians, due to their "popularity," wield power over the survival of millions.)

Democracy also poses a profound theological problem: It attempts to eliminate rule (government), which is a curse resulting from Original Sin, and replace it with "self-government," which does not exist. Democracy is rule not "of the people," but of a majority over a minority, earning Voltaire's comment that he preferred to live under the paw of a lion rather than under the teeth of a thousand rats. Democracy has not the slightest rational or scientific foundation, which is why the late Crane Brinton argued that it could only become in the long run a purely fideistic secular religion. Since government is the result of Original Sin, one has to be very modest in all one's expectations.

The return to democracy, a political form of antiquity which had failed completely and earned the ridicule and censure of the three philosophers who are the pillars of our civilization—Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle—is one of the most amazing features of the last 200 years. My American readers should realize that democracy came to their country as a gradual *alien* influence. It is mentioned neither in the Declaration nor in the Constitution, nor do we find in these documents the noun "Republic." Even Jefferson acknowledged (in the Declaration) that a free people can have a monarch as a *ruler*. Democracy, however, belongs to the left, and to arrive at our problem, which is how to choose between the terms "conservative" and "rightist," we have to deal with two intermediary questions: the distinction between right and left, and the very important religious background of our problem.

In Jonah 4:10, we read that in Nineveh the inhabitants were so stupid that they could not distinguish between right and left. This situation, however, we now find all over the world. What is "right"? Right is what is true, valid, and correct, regardless of whether it is old, traditional, and inherited, or contemporary, or planned for the future. Russell Kirk wrote a brilliant book, directed, as the title says, against the *Enemies of the Permanent Things*. And these "permanent things"—ideas, convictions, habits, customs, laws—are, *if truly valid*, what the "rightist" wants to preserve and defend. He will also not be overly eager to effect changes just for the sake of change, as stability has a positive value (in this age of confusion, more so than ever). "Rightist" is a timeless expression. "Conservative" implies a stop.

While the "rightist" stands for the "permanent things"—reasonable freedom, God's Word, transcendent values, personality, a socially mutable verticality—the "leftist" has practically the opposite vision: anti-personalist collectivism, identitarian uniformity and equality, horizontality, ethnicism, racism, materialism. Since 1989, leftism has largely abandoned state capitalism (socialism) and has been more lenient toward private enterprise, but it has also sped up its march toward Gomorrah.

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International socialism and national socialism are both equally leftist, and he who reluctantly admits that they are somewhat alike, often stammers that "extremes meet"—which is a *fausse idée claire*, a false but clear idea. Extremes obviously never meet, or ice would be like boiling water, giants like dwarfs, or scholars like illiterates. Of course, competitors hate each other often more than adversaries; thus, one brewer may hate another brewer more than he does the prohibitionist, but hostile brewers might join against the prohibitionist, as the very modern Third Reich (which did not "turn back the clock") joined with the "progressive" Soviet Union against "reactionary" Poland. Indeed, National Socialism represented an extreme form of leftism, as Goebbels declared on December 6, 1931, in *Der Angriff*: "We are the German left and despise bourgeois nationalism." In the *Horst Wessel Lied*, their official hymn, the National Socialists mourned their comrades shot by the "Red Front and the Reactionaries," and noble rightist officers tried to slaughter the Beast, who boasted that he represented "German Democracy." In 1926, Goebbels still proclaimed that he was a "German Communist," but later declared that National Socialism was the German counterpart to the French Revolution. That late French revival of democracy was a sadistic sex orgy without parallel in world history in which pregnant women were squeezed in wine-and-fruit presses, mothers with children were slowly roasted in baker's ovens, and naked fathers and daughters were tied together and drowned in "republican weddings." In Pont-de-Cé, a factory was erected in which the skins of the murdered Vendéens were used to manufacture rid-

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ing breeches and book covers. Not even the heirs of the French Revolution, who met in 1939 flying their red banners in the heart of Poland, engaged in similar atrocities: They committed murders in much greater quantity, but never achieved the diabolical quality of their 18th-century ancestors.

The extermination of Christianity was a major goal of the revolutions of 1789 and 1917, and both rightists and conservatives have been identified with the defense of religion. However, the religious implications of our discussion of these terms go beyond the propaganda of both Catholics and Protestants. The thesis that there is a straight line of development from the Reformation to the First Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and its three offspring is extremely popular among Catholic rightists. Luther appeared as a liberal, democratic progressivist who was riding high on the waves of the Renaissance and therefore was responsible for the unspeakable atrocities of our infamous century. Reacting indirectly to this conviction, ordinary Catholics, especially in the United States, engaged in a fulsome praise of the Middle Ages. As a matter of fact, in the United States much more so than in Europe, there exists between Catholics and Protestants an ignoble competition in misrepresenting the character of the Reformation. Luther and Calvin rebelled (violently, in fact) against the spirit of Christian humanism and the Renaissance. The real "moment" of the Reformation is the winter of 1510-11, when Luther stayed in Rome and was confronted by the spirit of antiquity in the form of the Renaissance, which, until then, he had known only in a purely literary form. Now he could see it and touch it with his hands.

The reformers, as medieval men, were arch-conservatives, but they also denied free will and believed in predestination, opposed reason, had contempt for philosophy, hoped for salvation by "faith alone," and were (with the exception of Zwingli) convinced that all the sages of antiquity (just as all non-Christians) were roasting in the everlasting fires of Hell. They established state churches under secular rulers and were "conservatives" in the most literal sense of the word. They accused the Catholic Church for additions, meaning changes, and in this they were correct. They wanted to go "back" to an imaginary "original Church." But the Catholic Church is *not* "conservative": Without changing her foundations and like a skyscraper in construction, she is "additive." (She might change rituals, laws, and regulations, and even add new dogmas, but never "cancel" one. She is a *live* body.) This is the reason why there are no conservative parties in Europe's Catholic countries. You can have parties with the "conservative" label in Scandinavia, Britain, or Canada, but not in Spain, Austria, Italy, or Slovakia. (There are, I have to admit, parties with strong Catholic support calling themselves "Christian Democratic," even though Leo XIII, in the encyclical *Graves de communi*, forbade the political use of this term, but few politicians are serious readers.)

The immediate result of the Reformation was a loss of general liberties. Life in Geneva became even more totalitarian than in the Massachusetts of the Puritans. In truly post-medieval countries, however, life had become sweet, humane, and enormously variable. Everett Dean Martin, a Congregational minister, in his *Liberty* (1930) said that Americans, having missed the Renaissance, have never had a chance truly to be free, and the same suspicion lies behind D.H. Lawrence's *Studies in Classic American Literature*. To believe that freedom can be given, granted, or assured by mere legislation, by paragraphs and constitutions, is naive (the same naiveté is at the bottom of feminism).

During the Enlightenment, "Protestantism" was perverted into the very contrary of what the Reformers aimed at: a very strict, disciplined, and severe form of simple, fideistic Christianity, culturally almost inactive and suspicious of all additions, of "frills." Pastor Niemöller, who later received the Lenin Prize, explained to me in 1947 that Protestants should not be afraid of a communist wave of oppression because all they need is a handy, small pocket Bible printed on India paper, while the poor Catholics need culture: architecture, painting, literature, poetry, musical composition, and so forth.

In the United States, the true believers of the Reformation faiths do not form exactly the general staff of the conservative movement, but certainly a very large segment of the rank and file. Among American conservatives, one also can find (ex-liberal) libertarians, true rightists, populist intellectual-baiting democrats, evangelical fundamentalists, and Lefebvrists. Some merely want to protect their savings, others primarily want to fight "permissive crime," while few have the courage to attack what had been called the "Religion of Democracy," which Eric Voegelin rightly considered a gnostic phenomenon. Very rare are those who envisage or plan a real alternative or realize that a "conservative," a man or a woman on the right, is, at least at heart, a real revolutionary and must reject the present order, which, of course, will pass as does everything else. There is no "end of history." *STAT CRUX DUM VOLVITUR ORBIS* ("The Cross stands while the Earth turns around"). Yet without planning for a future in which quality (i.e., knowledge, experience, and solid ethics) prevails, much worse might follow. The mere counting of noses must come to an end. We ought to learn from Ecclesiasticus 38:25-39.

There are two subjects which I should touch upon since they are of grave concern to American conservatives—ideologies and utopias. Since ideologies and the efforts to realize utopias have created immense harm and suffering in the last 200 years—a minimum of 80 million victims—they can be viewed very negatively. The same could be said of religions, constitutions, sexual activities, educational theories, the mass media, cars, airplanes, trade unions, and even sports. Man is not only a religious but also an ideological animal. Put anybody on a couch and question him for 20 minutes, and the dim outline of an ideology will appear, a more or less coherent view of life in this world (and also in the next one). Ideologies are inescapable to thinking people, and they might either grow out of a religious faith or—and here lies the great danger—replace it, becoming sometimes a fanatical secular religion.

The same is true of utopias. An *Outopos* is a vision of a nonexistent place or order which, as an improvement, ought to be established. Like reason, imagination is, after all, one of the great human privileges, and since this world is, in the words of the Psalmist and of Christian prayers, a "Valley of Tears," it is perfectly legitimate to make plans for a general improvement. *Malheur a celui qui n'a jamais rêvé*, Gustave Thibon told us: "Woe to him who has never dreamt." Saint Thomas More gave us the term "Utopia," and this martyr to the Faith playfully designed a social and political order as far as it could be established without revelation and resting solely on reason.

Yet certain utopias can become ideological substitutes for Christ's promises. Just as there are acceptable, mediocre, crazy, and satanic ideologies, a similar distinction has to be made among utopias. Some, conflicting with reason, could never be

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realized; others might be "organized," but only with inhuman efforts and sacrifices, which render them unreasonable; others again are desirable and feasible. Today, we certainly have to reflect on an order to be established after the demise of the democratic experiment whose hypocritical traits are evident, especially to the psychologically oriented philosopher of history. (There is no "American Experiment," but only a democratic experiment in America, which the United States will outlive.)

Allan Bloom remarked that all great European thinkers are men of the right, but I would say the same about America, unless you rank Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman, John Dewey, and B.F. Skinner among the "Great Thinkers." I dedicated my little German book on democracy (1996) to the Swiss and American authors who have influenced me in my political writing, though only those who have gone to their reward. The list of Americans starts alphabetically with John and Henry Adams and ends with Richard M. Weaver. Not all of them would have called themselves "conservatives," but none of them "liberals" in the present debased American verbiage.

As a Catholic, I have to think "globally." I want the ideas and ideals of the right to triumph (at least in our civilization), and therefore, I view and review all terms critically. The area where the word "conservative" has a magnetic attraction is rather small: North America and Northern and Western Europe. Conservative parties and movements have not offered or produced real alternatives and have not done much else but bemoan and stem a bit the leftward drift of state and society. In this, they have had more failures than successes, partly because the left appeals more to the "flesh" than to the spirit, and partly because man is an ideological animal and "conservatism" has provided us with neither an ideology nor even a passable utopia. To act solely as a brake to an evil evolutionary or revolutionary process is not an inspiring program. Many "conservatisms" bearing that label are merely castrated forms of leftism.

We must face the fact that the term "conservative" has a musty smell in the nostrils of modern man, who is looking for "Instant Paradise." "Conservatism," moreover, does not tell us *what* we want to conserve. We certainly do not desire to preserve the *status quo*, but rather the "permanent things," which are the right things. And "right," as I have said before, has in all languages a positive meaning, while left has a negative one—even in Arabic, Hebrew, Sanskrit, and Japanese. It has deeper psychological and more universal roots than "conservative." And this is the reason I often start or terminate my lectures on all continents with the simple statement: Ladies and gentlemen, right is right, and left is wrong! c

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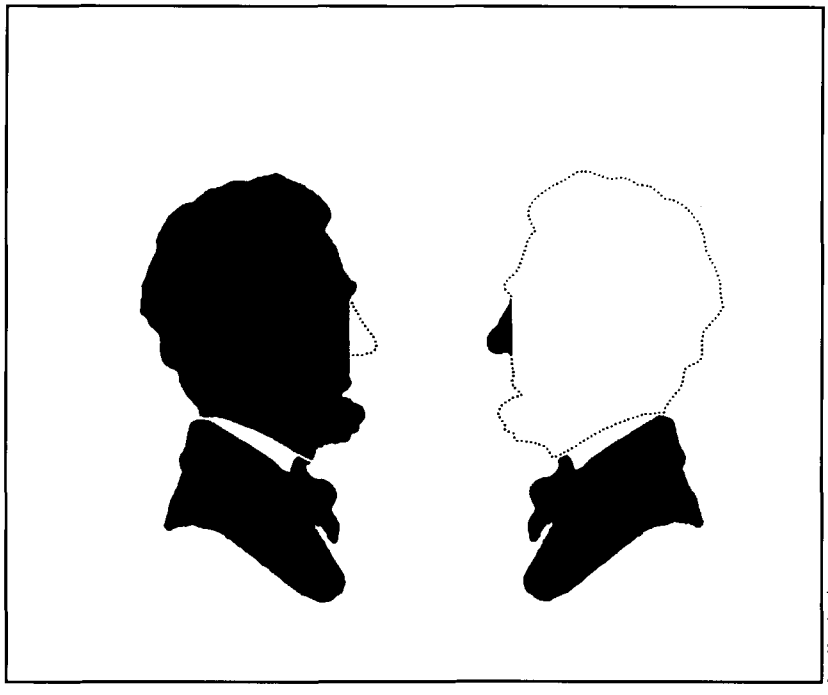
Equality, Left and Right

by Paul Gottfried



Igor Kopelnitsky

Among the significant changes on the American intellectual right in the last 50 years is the growing emphasis on equality. From the speeches of Jack Kemp and the collected works of Professor Harry V. Jaffa to the arguments advanced for Proposition 209 in California, it seems that equality is not only a principle worthy of our attention: It is now the highest principle and one that Jack Kemp calls the "conservative principle" *par excellence*. Although such tributes to equality predictably come from neoconservative politicians and Straussian "political philosophers," they do indicate what is becoming a characteristic of the conservative mainstream.

According to this recently revealed conservative dogma, the United States was founded as a "proposition nation," and its germinal creed is "All men are created equal." Abraham Lincoln, by destroying the states, helped give flesh to that creed, and the federal government waged war on foreign powers in this century to advance it. (This was Allan Bloom's argument in *The Closing of the American Mind*.) Moreover, the American crusade for equality continued as the "good" civil rights movement, exemplified by Martin Luther King, Jr., and Bayard Rustin, and in "moderate" as opposed to "radical" feminism. Since respectable conservatives do not want the egalitarian ox to get close enough to gore them, the march of equality is conveniently brought to rest in the mid-60's, with the emergence of an American immigration-expansionist and anti-discrimination welfare state.

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Considerable sophistic energy has gone into explaining why we should not push a splendid principle too far, e.g., by treating "equality of opportunity" as "equality of result" or, as minicon Bill Kristol argued in the *New York Times* (February 12, 1995), by threatening the "political progress on equal rights for women" by asking too much from the state.

The multi-million dollar neoconservative project of promoting "moderate" versions of welfare-statism and social engineering is a manipulative rather than philosophic enterprise, and it depends, for its justification, on a series of philosopher-kings who, like Lincoln and Roosevelt, seize executive power with both hands. The achievement of Lincoln as depicted by Harry Jaffa or that of FDR as presented in Harvey Mansfield, Jr.'s *Taming of the Prince* was to have twisted and suppressed constitutional liberty for a universal ideal. As Jaffa himself pointed out in *National Review* (September 21, 1965), "no American statesman ever violated the ordinary maxims of civil liberty more than did Lincoln." But these violations of American liberty were entirely justifiable because, as Lincoln knew, "civil liberties are the liberties of men in civil society," and those liberties are tied to higher principles and duties. As Jaffa explains in *Equality and Liberty*, constitutional liberty for us was intended to be subordinate to the "principles of the Declaration of Independence," understood as political equality. In the name of that equality, Lincoln had a right to sacrifice "bodies whose souls remained *dedicated*" to foundational American principles.

Jaffa and other neoconservatives and Straussians apply the same justification to later presidents who entangled their countrymen in ennobling struggles, from the punishment of Southern slave-owners to the "crusade for democracy" waged against

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Kaiser Bill to the Gulf War. Those conflicts provide, as Allan Bloom suggests, "educational experience," and that experience involves teaching our people and those whose brains we knock out about "human rights," especially about "democratic equality." These educational experiences usually entail fighting ethnic groups that neoconservatives dislike—Germans, Slavs, Arabs, and reactionary Southerners—and on the side of those they like—upper-class Englishmen, Israelis, and progressive Yankee millionaires. The pursuit of moderate egalitarianism results inevitably in a slow drift leftward which they and their friends can presumably control and which will not empower minority leaders to a point that is intolerable.

The obvious problem with conservative egalitarianism is that there is nothing historically conservative or even classically liberal about the glorification of political equality. This new conservative principle is in fact the ideal of social democrats and Jacobins. As Clyde Wilson observes, "What they say is not unusual but certainly not conservative." And, so far from being conservative, it is not even defensible on rational grounds. In a still unpublished manuscript, analytic philosopher David Gordon has gone through the works of Harry Jaffa and his disciples to expose their perpetually ragged reasoning. Treating as apodictic what is never demonstrated, ascribing disagreement with their ideas to racist and antisemitic attitudes, and ignoring historical contexts are all essential to the arguments defending these "universal" positions. Gordon notes how little concerned his targets are with the circumstances surrounding their texts of choice. Though Lincoln intermittently may have opposed slavery, his remarks during (though not exclusively during) his debates with Senator Douglas indicate that he did not believe that blacks could or should enjoy political equality with white Americans.

There is in fact nothing in Lincoln's words or biography up until 1856 to show that he ever held anything like Jaffa's opinions on race and politics. Even leading Abolitionists like Ralph Waldo Emerson disliked slavery for, among other reasons, introducing into an otherwise Northern European people black Africans whom Emerson thought unsuited for citizenship. Similar nonegalitarian objections to slavery could be found in the writings of Thomas Jefferson and of other signers of the Declaration who owned slaves. Though these Southern planters signed a document with a borrowed phrase from John Locke about natural equality, it is a long leap from there to the modern politics of equality. He who says "yes" to the Declaration as a statement of national independence need not be endorsing the idea of political equality for all races, as both leftist historian Richard Hofstadter and Southern conservative M.E. Bradford have pointed out.

There is no compelling reason to assume that the Declaration (mostly a list of grievances like the 1629 English Petition of Rights) stands behind the Constitution, which nowhere invokes the "principles" of 1776. There is no reason to assign pivotal importance to the Declaration's phrase about equality, even if Lincoln pointed back to it as the "sheet anchor" of our founding. After all, the equal right of all people not to be enslaved, to which Lincoln does refer, does not imply other more radical forms of equality.

But there is another observation to be made. Those who now prate about equality believe even less in it than does the reactionary right. Democratic ideals in the past were identitarian ones, assuming the kind of unity among citizens that Aristotle, Rousseau, and Jefferson thought indispensable for democratic polities. *Homoiotes* (likeness, or parity), which the Greeks saw as the essence of democratic regimes, meant something entirely different from such late 20th-century democratic litmus tests as the availability of entitlements or adherence to a "universal proposition." It signified membership in a community held together by shared ancestry, gods, and customs. As Aristotle notes in the *Constitution of Athens*, Pericles rose in the esteem of the *demos* when he struck from the list of Athenian citizens those who were not descended from Athenian parents on both sides. As ancient historian Paul Veyne observes, open citizenship is the mark of an empire, not of a democracy. To carry the analogy with antiquity one step further, modern global democracy creates imperial subjects, not democratic citizens.

While the American founders were not trying to replicate a claustrophobic ancient democracy, they did assume that their own extended, representative republic would require sharp cultural and ethnic boundaries. Whether one quotes from Jefferson's *Notes on Virginia* or from *Federalist* 2 (on the good fortune of culturally and ancestrally homogeneous republics), it is clear that the founding generation did not believe their country could survive as a proposition nation. Citizenship would require a high degree of *homoiotes* (which was more necessary for republics than monarchies) if the federal union was to be maintained. In this respect the advocacy of ethnic unity, combined with Protestant-tinged civic culture, was consistent with American ideas of democratic homogeneity.

LIBERAL ARTS

HUDDLED MASSES, BJORNING TO BE FREE

"Over the last 25 years, Sweden has seen its centuries-old homogenous population become 10 percent non-Nordic, and the assimilation and acceptance of diversity that the country loudly wished to see in other mixed societies has not occurred here.

"'It was so easy in the 60's and 70's to look at television and say, "That's wrong,"' said Dag Jutfelt. . . . 'It turns out we didn't know so much about the rest of the world when we were telling them how to live.'"

—*from Warren Hoge, "A Swedish Dilemma: The Immigrant Ghetto"* (New York Times, *October 6, 1998*)

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American presidents from Jefferson through Lincoln and Wilson to FDR thought that the racial preconditions of American citizenship were not mere personal idiosyncrasies or signs of generational bias. They believed that a democratic society could not function without an (at least residually) homogeneous population. Such a concern, however embarrassing to neoconservatives and other liberals, is quintessentially democratic. In a regime dependent on an active popular will, as opposed to our current system of electronic manipulation, a deep sense of community is vital.

Significantly, the appeal to equality made by Ward Connerly and other supporters of Proposition 209 suggests the same misunderstanding about democracy encountered among neoconservatives. Connerly crisscrossed the country with the usual egalitarian platitudes: Allowing commercial and educational enterprises to engage in discrimination, for the purpose of rectifying past injustices against blacks, Hispanics, and women, goes against the "vision of equality" preached by Lincoln and Martin Luther King. It also contradicts the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which tried to implement that vision by creating a "color-blind" society. Not surprisingly, Proposition 209 drew on the language of that act.

But the Civil Rights Act promoted neither conservatism nor democratic government. It empowered a federal commission, overlapping the congressional and executive branches, which monitors all sorts of social and commercial relations. While supposedly designed to fight discrimination, that oversight commission, in alliance with the courts, has been inflicting minority quotas and mandating minority set-asides since the 1960's. Whether or not this was supposed to happen, the fact is that it did, and for an obvious reason: Vast discretionary power was conferred on the central state to alter social behavior. How could anyone have expected a different outcome?

In taking sides on a false issue such as Proposition 209, potential critics of the managerial state are distracted from the real question that is important for a democracy. Is the incursion by federal engineers into communal relations across the United States compatible with self-government and with the civic life necessary to generate and preserve it? Unfortunately, this question was never addressed in the debates over Proposition 209. Partisans on both sides agreed about the central role of the managerial state as the source and instrument of socialization. A ritualistic debate took place, appealing to the fictitious visions of Lincoln and Martin Luther King and to variant strategies for democratically enforcing "true" equality. For genuine democrats and for those of the right, however, it is not worth fighting over whether public administrators create a color-blind, gender-neutral society with or without explicit quotas. Yielding such power in the first place is entirely unacceptable.

Though I for one have no special preference for authentically democratic regimes, they do feature distinctive strengths and ways of life. But our "democratists," as Claes Ryn calls them, have no interest in fostering these characteristics, and they attack those who would restore popular government as right-wing extremists. By now, it is clear that this talk about democratic equality is not the profession of a philosophic creed, but the self-justification of careerists attached to a post-democratic and post-conservative American empire. The pampered defenders of a generous regime have little interest in philosophy and still less in meeting the objections of anyone to their right.

Sculpture Garden

by Alan Sullivan

A blue jay on the Segal scolds
As sunshine gilds the marigolds,
The yellow elms and gravel walks.
On a park bench, a couple talks
Of Life and Art while pigeons wheel
And children tug the rusty stalks
Which rotate leaves of Calder's steel.

How droll to find, discreetly hid
Amid the topiary grid,
A nook where graven slabs and walls
Blazon in Roman capitals
The grievances of womankind
Casting aside her veils and shawls
To demonstrate her strength of mind.

Like Circe changing men to swine,
This butcher of poetic line
Reduces stone to posterboard.
Pity the mason who deplored
Carving her testimonial,
Yet craving work, could ill-afford
To spurn a fee on principle.

We share his lack of sympathy
For jolted incivility
Misplaced on this October lawn
Where lovers loll and children yawn,
Ready after their play for naps
As autumn's early dusk comes on
And far away some stray bitch yaps.

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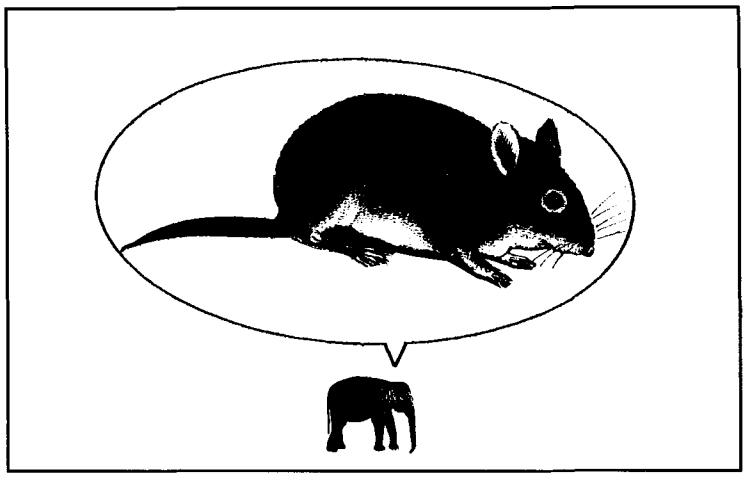
Nations Within Nations

by Samuel Francis



Igor Kopelnitsky

By the end of 1998, it was no longer possible for any informed and honest person to claim that the massive immigration experienced by the United States since the 1970's was not significantly altering the culture, economy, and politics of the nation. Last summer, the *Washington Post*, long a zealous opponent of immigration restriction, published a series of articles that effectively conceded the point. "Lives Transplanted, a Region Transformed. Steady Immigration Changes Face of the Region; Schools Add Up Immigrant Costs," one headline informed its readers. The series, as well as other accumulating facts about immigrants not included in it, was not simply a confirmation of what supporters of immigration control have always suspected, indeed knew—that it is not humanly possible for millions of people from one culture to transplant themselves into another culture without exerting some deleterious effect—but actually pointed to an even more important truth: Mass immigration is not merely destroying one nation but also is giving birth to a new one, and the new nation will not be a place where most Americans would feel comfortable or even be welcome.

"I think I'm still a Mexican," Maria Jacinto, a working-class woman from Mexico who left her native land for ours some years ago, told the *Post*'s reporter. "When my skin turns white and my hair turns blond, then I'll be an American." Mrs. Jacinto surely knows that most Americans are not blond and that many of them are not white, but her identification of our nation and hers in terms of these biological traits tells us a good deal about the nation that is emerging in our midst, about the nation we are ceasing to be, and about the very nature of nationality itself.

Mrs. Jacinto thinks of nationality in racial terms. Not for her the soft abstractions of the "first universal nation" or the "proposition country" beloved of neoconservative apologists for open borders, nor the happy evasions of race that other nationalisms like to invoke—language, culture, history, religion, etc. For Mrs. Jacinto, as for many of her co-nationals, the nation is simply what they have always told us it was—*La Raza*—and there is no quibbling about the dangers of Darwinism and "scientific racialism." Spokesmen for *La Raza* make it very clear that the nation, the political expression of their race that they plan to organize, will have no place for folks who are not part of the *Raza*. "California is going to be a Hispanic state," announces Mario Obledo, one of the major leaders of the Hispanic "community" in California and a nominee for the Presidential Medal of Freedom. "We are going to control all the institutions. If people don't like it, they should leave." Richard Alatorre of the Los Angeles City Council told an Hispanic audience in September 1996,

> Because our numbers are growing, they're afraid of what this great mass of minorities that now live in our communities, they're afraid that we're going to take over the governmental institutions and other institutions. They're right, we will take them over, and we are not going to go away, we are here to stay, and we are saying *ya basta* [enough]. . . .

Jose Angel Gutierrez of the University of Texas at Arlington, a founder of "Chicano nationalism," said in January 1995,

> Group ascendancy. Why in order for us to have a homeland we must give up our Mexican-ness and become white-like? Why? Hostages in our land. Prisoners of war. We are millions. We just have to survive. We have an aging White America. They are not making babies. They are dying. It's a matter of time. The explosion is in our population.

It is not just Mrs. Jacinto, but fairly representative leaders and spokesmen for Hispanics generally who glimpse the future nation *La Raza* is creating. Their vision of Hispanic identity is one of us (*La Raza*) against them (whites, gringos, Anglos, blondes, what Mrs. Jacinto in the *Post* interview called *gueros*, Americans), and what in their minds distinguishes us from them is not for the most part (and perhaps not at all) language, culture, history, or religion, but race, pure and simple.

Of course, race by itself is not really what distinguishes and

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identifies the Hispanic demographic nucleus inside the United States. Mexicans, by far the largest part of the Hispanic immigrant population, are racially indistinguishable from many other Central Americans and even many Caribbean immigrants, but they do not always have much in common with other Hispanics, and in the grand new nation that sparkles in the eyes of Mr. Obledo and his racial *companeros*, it would not be too surprising if the Mexicans, the Salvadorans, the Nicaraguans, the Cubans, the Puerto Ricans, and all the rest of *La Raza* started cutting one another's throats. They will discover that race by itself is not sufficient to constitute a nation. If it were otherwise, there would not be two different words, "nation" and "race," to represent two different, though related, concepts.

In a famous passage of the *Federalist*, John Jay enumerated the qualities that Americans shared in common that constituted their nationality: "one united people—a people descended from the same ancestors, speaking the same language, professing the same religion, attached to the same principles of government, very similar in their manners and customs," and sharing through their common victory "their general liberty and independence." The very first element Jay mentioned was descent from the same ancestors, which is a definition of ethnicity or race. However, nationality for him and for most Americans was certainly not confined to common descent but included other bonds as well. Though not the whole of Jay's idea of nationality, ethnic inheritance was clearly an important part of it, and the mental and behavioral characteristics that are part of that inheritance, as well as the by-no-means negligible physical appearance of those descended from the same ancestors, help form the bonds without which nationality cannot exist. But by itself, common descent does not ordinarily constitute a sufficient social, political, or cultural bond to unite all those who share it in a common national unity. The Hispanics who get to cross the borders into the new nation of *La Raza*, or Aztlan, or whatever they plan to call it, will in fact share a good deal in addition to race—a common history and a common memory of that history, a more or less common religion, a common language, and a common way of doing things and evaluating things that constitutes a common culture—even though they and their leaders, to judge from their own rhetoric, seem to be oblivious to such bonds. Yet without those commonalities they would not even be inclined to form a nation, new or old.

In *Alien Nation*, Peter Brimelow defines a nation as "an *ethno-cultural community*—an interlacing of ethnicity and culture," a definition that manages to synthesize race and nation. "The word 'nation,'" he tells us,

> is derived from the Latin *nescare*, to be born [actually, the Latin word is *nasci*; so much for the vaunted classical education of British schools, but the point remains the same]. It intrinsically implies a link by blood. A nation in a real sense is an extended family. The merging process by which all nations are created is not merely cultural, but to a considerable extent biological, through intermarriage.

Nor is it only Mr. Brimelow who thinks so. He quotes the definition of "nation" offered by Daniel Patrick Moynihan, senator from New York and once a respected intellectual, in his book, *Pandemonium*: "a group of people who *believe* that they are ancestrally related. It is the largest grouping that shares that belief." Moynihan's emphasis on "believe" might seem to deflect from the reality of biological descent toward the intellectual reality of what a population thinks as the fundamental bond of nationality, but the fact is that no population that is not to a large extent really "ancestrally related" can believe that it is. It is difficult to name a modern nation-state whose historic population thinks it shares a common ancestry but in reality does not. No matter how hard you try to pitch them out, race and ethnicity—biological descent and the traits carried by descent—come back, and the harder you try, the harder they return, as they return today, among Hispanics, blacks, Asians, and just about every other racial category except among Americans who trace their ancestry to Britain and Europe.

But whether the emerging nationalities and their nationalisms are defined by race or by other features, their appearance within the territory of the old nation that Jay described suggests that the political future of that territory is going to be shaped by forces quite different from those that have shaped the old nation. With the exception of the Indian wars of the 18th and 19th centuries, the political conflicts of American history have been conflicts within Jay's "one united people," even when they imagined themselves to be two or more peoples. The political struggles of the future, and indeed many of those being waged now, are conflicts among the different races, nations, and cultures—the different peoples—that have begun to emerge. Their emergence does not necessarily imply that the old nation will fragment into separate national units through a process of "Balkanization"; it is quite possible that national unity will persist and that the (literally) inter-national conflicts between the internal nations will be conducted by fairly conventional political means—elections, lobbying, propaganda, and appointments—rather than by the more typical means of international conflict, namely, war.

The intensity of black self-consciousness today, not only in terms of race but just as strongly in terms of history, culture, religion, and even language, is sufficient to justify speaking of a distinct black nation within the United States. But the black nation appears to be content (so far) to pursue its national identity within the political-territorial framework of the old nation without claiming a particular territory within the larger nation as its own.

Hispanic nationalists, however, may take a different path. Their talk about Aztlan or *reconquista* of the Southwest suggests that they aim at actual independence or bringing that part of the United States back to Mexico. My bet, however, is that they will do neither, no matter how much power they acquire in the Southwestern states. If the remainder of the United States stayed intact, a separate and independent Hispanic nation-state would simply be one more Central American appendage of *El Norte*. Merging with Mexico is equally unlikely. What would be the point of rejoining Mexico, especially since being part of a First World country like the United States rather than a Third World one like Mexico offers far more advantages?

In the managerial state, national and ethnic subgroups actually have material incentives to keep the macro-national state intact while their own micro-national groups contend with each other and pursue their own interests within the conventional political framework of the larger state. The national and ethnic subgroups, even though they may evolve into full-fledged national consciousness, lack the military power to establish their own territorial autonomy and could expect to gain

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little or nothing even if they had the power. As long as the dominant or majority national group (namely, European-Americans) remains unable to articulate its own national identity and consciousness and unwilling to assert its exclusive right to its national territory and explicitly reject the legitimacy of other nations to form within its territory, then the subnations will encounter no significant political obstacle to exploiting the larger nation-state for their own purposes. Those purposes for the most part would not reach beyond the usual fruits of political conflict in the soft managerial states of the Western world: more political appointments for members of the particular group, more subsidies and privileges for the group, more acknowledgment of their status as "victims" of the supine majority group, etc. But the essential premise of this kind of intra-nationalist politics is that the supine majority not become militant.

If the majority (which the Euro-American population will cease to be in the middle of the next century) should show signs of repossessing its own nation and reviving its own national consciousness, then the subgroups could no longer expect to gain political advantages by playing politics within the large national framework. They would then have an incentive to embark on a "Balkanization" or separatist or secessionist strategy, even though they might lack the power to enforce it. The likely result would then be internal war between the racial-national groups, or at least a tense compromise by which some groups could continue to get some rewards from the political system but not all that they would like.

To a large extent, this future is already upon us, and it is hardly surprising given the brutal reality of ethnic, racial, and national conflicts in world history. The last 30 years in the United States and Western Europe have largely been an era of illusions, in which the liberal, egalitarian, integrationist ideal articulated by Martin Luther King, Jr.—to judge people not by the color of their skin but by the content of their character—has prevailed in public rhetoric, if not in actual law and practice. In fact, it is doubtful that very many people ever really believed King's words, and certainly those who collaborated with King have consistently supported the most blatant racial privileges for their own group even as they deny the legitimacy of such privileges to other groups. Race, in other words, has returned (if, indeed, it ever departed at all) and now claims to be the very foundation of nationality and group identity.

The return of race and the consequent emergence of incipient racial nations within the old nation is only one indication that the political framework of the nation may itself be changing. Whereas the old framework, at least in ideological terms, contained a contest between a right committed to a small, low-cost state and a left committed to a large, active, and high-cost state, the contest in the future is more likely to determine whether there is a larger national unity at all or whether national unity should yield to a transnational framework. The political and ideological lines of division over transnational issues are already considerably blurred, with Newt Gingrich and Bill Clinton allying to support NAFTA, the World Trade Organization, increased global free trade, foreign aid, continuous military intervention for ostensibly altruistic causes, IMF funding, etc., while Pat Buchanan, Ross Perot, Ralph Nader, and a fragile but growing coalition of Republicans and Democrats in Congress collaborate to oppose them. While globalists agree on ethnic and cultural issues (they are pro-immigration and pro-affirmative action, egalitarian and universalist in principle but supportive of anti-white racial privilege in practice), the nationalists have yet to come to a consensus on such issues.

Nevertheless, the lines of politics are increasingly clear. In place of a politics that debates over the size, cost, scope, and scale of the state, there will be a politics concerned with whether there will be a nation. This is in fact what former *National Review* editors John O'Sullivan and Peter Brimelow have called the "national question," and conflict over it is likely to be the main political issue of the next half-century. It can easily subsume many of the religious-moral issues that now animate the religious right, and it obviously aligns with the racial-national identities now emerging. Whites may end up largely opposing transnationalism, and non-whites, who have hitherto opposed high rates of immigration, may come to support the transnationalist agenda, at least as a means of weakening the national vigor of the dominant state.

The future of American politics, then, is likely to be one in which the lines of division and conflict are between those who want the nation to persist as John Jay characterized it in 1787 and those who want it to vanish, either into the transnational haze of the New World Order or into the racial-national fragments that can manipulate and exploit its shell. Since the main obstacle to both parts of the anti-national side is the dominance of the core ethnic group of the old nation, both the transnationalists and the racial-nationalists share an interest in ensuring that the core ceases to be the core (i.e., is demographically marginalized by immigration), ceases to possess a consciousness that can distinguish its identity and interests (i.e., is punished, ostracized, and demonized for its "racism"), and ceases to exercise group power (i.e., is dislodged from control of the cultural and political institutions it created and has historically controlled). The national question, then, almost necessarily implies the racial question, and however limited race may be as a basis for social and political unity, it cannot be escaped or avoided as an element in national-political conflicts.

What that means, however, is that white Americans will increasingly find themselves trapped between a transnationalism driven from above, by the economic interests and cultural preferences of elites, and a racial nationalism (or several different racial nationalisms) driven from below, by the group interests and identities of adversarial ethnicities. While the alliance between the transnationalists and the anti-white racial nationalists may be fragile, its very existence could encourage an intensification of Euro-American unity. If such an intensification occurs before European-Americans become a minority in the United States in the middle of the next century, the resultant nationalist movement could emerge as the most important and powerful political force of the next hundred years.

The American future, then, is likely to be rather more complicated than one of simple fragmentation, internal military conflict, or mere chaos, let alone the triumph of the fast-food, shopping mall, more-growth-forever utopia slobbered over by neoconservatives and libertarian cultists. The modernization that such utopianism presupposes has already damaged the national and cultural homogeneity of the United States enough to render questionable the survival of the nation that John Jay described. Yet even if the historic American nation expires, other nations will survive it, and one of those survivors may even be descended from the same ancestors as the old nation that now faces extinction.

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"All the News Unfit to Print"

Signs of the Times

Vol. 1 No. 1 January 1999

Poor Augusto Pinochet! Try to imagine Fidel Castro flying to England on private business and getting arrested for alleged crimes against humanity. Within hours, every talking head on this planet would be up in arms, demanding British blood and Castro's freedom.

It hardly needs stating that Fidel would be better suited to incarceration at Her Majesty's pleasure than Pinochet. *El Jeffe*'s 40 years of misrule have brought untold misery and suffering to millions of Cubans. *La Revolucion* also meant the deaths of thousands of political opponents, and tens of thousands of ruined lives. While Pinochet paved the way for Chile's transition to the democracy it is today, after four decades of dictatorship, Castro shows no sign of mellowing.

Clive Nicholls, the Queen's Counsel representing Pinochet, warned that the denial of his immunity will open up the prospect of the Queen being extradited from a third country to Argentina to stand trial for the murder of Argentinean POWs by British forces in the Falklands, or to Ireland for the murder of Irish citizens by the British Secret Service in Gibraltar.

But "international morality" is a decidedly one-edged sword. Jiang Zemin, the president of China and the architect of the Tiananmen Square massacre, may safely come to the United States; Muammar Qaddafi may not. (No civilized person would want either of those two gentlemen at his dinner table, but that is not the point.) If Serbs and Croats want to secede from Bosnia, it is definitely not on; but if Albanians want to secede from Serbia, that is a different story. If Serbs try to stop them, NATO bombers start revving their engines.

That trigger-happy alliance includes Turkey, and in a non-relativistic scheme of things, NATO should be prepared to bomb its own members. According to an Associated Press report (October 25), Turkey

> is in its 15th year of a fight against Kurdish rebels seeking autonomy in southeastern Turkey. Some 37,000 people have died in the struggle.

Thirty-seven thousand dead? That's 37 "Kosovos" so far, year in, year out, since those distant days when Reagan was in his first term, and Bill Gates was yet to make his first billion.

Speaking of Kosovo, public television viewers may have noticed that Jim Lehrer on *News Hour* (October 2), responded "What's wrong with that?" to Senator Warner's concern that the remaining Serbs in Kosovo would be wiped out if the Albanians take over. It would be interesting to observe the fallout if Lehrer expressed similar sentiments about the settlers on the West Bank—should Mr. Arafat ever be allowed to take back that piece of real estate.

By way of a modest consolation, Serbs will be gratified to learn from the *Agence France Presse* (October 10) that a delegation from France's National Front (FN) went to Kosovo "to support Serbia in its showdown with NATO allies." FN deputy vice president Jacques Dore expressed the Front's support for Serbia's "just struggle to safeguard its national identity."

We've known all along that those LePenists are sturdy fellows, but that fact is now clear to none other than Charles de Gaulle. According to a report in the *Times* of London (October 24), the eldest grandson and namesake of Le Général said he was willing to stand for the FN in the European parliamentary elections in June 1999. M. de Gaulle, who is already a Euroskeptic member of the European Parliament, believes that Jean-Marie Le Pen's people better represent the ideals of his grandfather than does the wishy-washy Gaullist Party that bears his name. With the mainstream right in disarray, the presence of M. de Gaulle on its slate would be a coup for the FN, which already commands 15 percent of the national vote.

At the opposite end of the European political spectrum, another illustrious grandson—that of Leonid Brezhnev—congratulated Massimo D'Alema of Italy's Democratic Party of the Left (formerly known as the Communist Party) on his recent appointment. While Le Pen's elevation to a position of power in France would prompt our ruling elites to boycott claret and Roquefort, the *Corriere della sera* reports that Clinton press flack Joe Lockhart has declared that the White House "will be happy to work in close contact" with the new government in Rome headed by D'Alema.

Like its predecessors, the new Italian ministry is gung-ho for Europe, but the Europhoric camp is not as monolithic as it used to be. As 1998 drew to an end, the French were trying to put the best spin on the embarrassing refusal of new German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder to take part in a joint celebration of the end of World War I on November 8. For years, ex-Chancellor Helmut Kohl and his French colleagues marked this anniversary with joint Franco-German ceremonies near Aachen, on the Franco-German border, and at Vrigne-Meuse in the Ardennes, the last place where French and German soldiers died in the Great War. But Schroeder told French President Jacques Chirac that he would not take part, and he ruled out any German participation, now or in the future. He indicated that he was not bound by Kohl's earlier acceptance of the invitation to this year's event.

Schroeder said he wanted "a new Germany that presented a new face to the world and not one of guilt." *Le Monde* and *Liberation* warn that Schroeder's decision has added to growing French concerns that, under Schroeder's coalition government, Germany has turned away from France.

Back home, amidst the media blitz that accompanied the release in December of the new $70 million animated feature, *Prince of Egypt*, an interesting detail from the history of this masterpiece of popular culture went unnoticed. Before the final version was completed, DreamWorks SKG—the movie studio formed by Steven Spielberg, Jeffrey Katzenberg,

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and David Geffen—screened a rough-cut for an interesting focus group. The invitees included the Council on American Islamic Relations, the Muslim Council, the Muslim Public Affairs Council, the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee, the Islamic Information Service, and diplomats from a number of Muslim countries. The film is an adaptation of the life of Moses "based" on the Book of Exodus. Following the preview, studio executives solicited comments and suggestions on the film's content from the invitees "to ensure historical accuracy and to eliminate sources of stereotyping."

It is ironic that Muslims were given screening rights for a film that deals with a period in history when their religion did not even exist. As for the ancient Egyptians, they were, of course, not Arabs. The only real descendants of the Pharaohs in Egypt are the Coptic Orthodox minority. But the Copts, being Christian, are unlikely to be invited to a screening, let alone awarded the seal of victimhood that they deserve. Their daily lot under the rule of the Muslim Arab majority is little known to most Americans. A glimpse is provided by the *Daily Telegraph* of London (October 25):

> Hundreds of Copts have been rounded up in southern Egypt after suspected retaliatory killings involving local Muslims and Christians. . . . Most Copts are too frightened to speak about their plight. But the local bishop and two priests are now facing the death penalty for bringing the persecution to the attention of the world. . . . Police have reportedly detained about 1,200 Christians in Al-Kosheh, near Luxor in Upper Egypt. Seized in groups of 50 at a time, many were nailed to crosses or manacled to doors with their legs tied together, then beaten and tortured with electric shocks to their genitals, while police denounced them as "infidels." An 11-year-old boy, Romani Boctor, was hung upside down from an electric ceiling fan and tortured as the fan rotated. Young girls were raped and mothers were forced to lay their babies on the floor of police stations and watch police beat them with sticks. . . .
>
> Copts were the ancient inhabitants of Egypt before the Arab invasions in the seventh century, but have been surrounded for centuries by a hostile Muslim majority. They now need presidential permission to open a church, their history cannot be taught in schools and people can be arrested under the National Security Act for converting to their faith. Mustafa Shukravi, a human rights activist who converted to Christianity and was jailed for 10 months, was granted asylum in England last September. He said: "I was beaten with sticks and electric shocks. I was hung, blindfolded, made to stand for five days and five nights." . . . The Clinton administration sees Mr. Mubarak as a key player in peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians and seems unlikely to risk upsetting him by reducing its £1.3 billion aid package

In the meantime, on the other side of the Mediterranean, a French Muslim made his own modest contribution to the cause of inter-faith relations *á la Arabique*. According to *Agence France Presse* (October 16) an Albanian court has charged Claude Cheik Ben Abdel, 27, with the murder of a young Albanian Christian. Ben Abdel came to Tirana posing as a journalist and hired the victim, Leonard Vangjeli, 22, to be his interpreter. In fact, Ben Abdel and eight other Islamic militants came from France to help ethnic Albanian rebels in Kosovo, prosecutor Ariston Puka said. The group had smuggled weapons and killed Vangjeli because he was a witness. Ben Abdel admitted to the murder, saying he had killed Vangjeli to "accomplish the will of God."

That the size of a country does not necessarily correlate to the magnitude of the horrors emanating from it was confirmed two days later when *Agence France Presse* reported that an illegal clinic, involved in the traffic of baby organs, was discovered in the Albanian capital, Tirana, during an investigation of alleged baby trafficking from Albania to Italy. The clinic was administrated by Albanian doctors and surgeons who "operated on babies and sent their organs to Italy," reportedly upon the orders of Italian Mafia bosses. "Skillful surgeons have carried out many operations on babies and sold their organs in Italy, earning large amounts of money," a senior prosecution official said. The scandal first came to light when gravediggers discovered that the coffins of some allegedly stillborn infants were empty.

Let us hope that the missing Albanian babies will be the next cause Tony Blair decides to promote, when he tires of persecuting Pinochet and egging on his American buddy to bomb the Serbs. The cause is worthy, and it is harmless. It would even justify the paean that one Dominic Mohan sang to him last fall in that official organ of British Yobbery, the *Sun* of London:

> From the moment I heard the opening bars of Dario G'z Ibiza's anthem *Sunchyme* I realised that the days of dull politics were long gone. The PM put his hand on his heart throughout and his words gave me goosebumps. I realised later I had witnessed something very special. It was perfectly scripted, simple enough for a layman like me to understand, and oozed passion.

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Confidants of Blood

by William Mills

"If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth."
—Psalm 137:6

Summer of Deliverance:
A Memoir of Father and Son
by Christopher Dickey
New York: Simon & Schuster;
256 pp., $24.00

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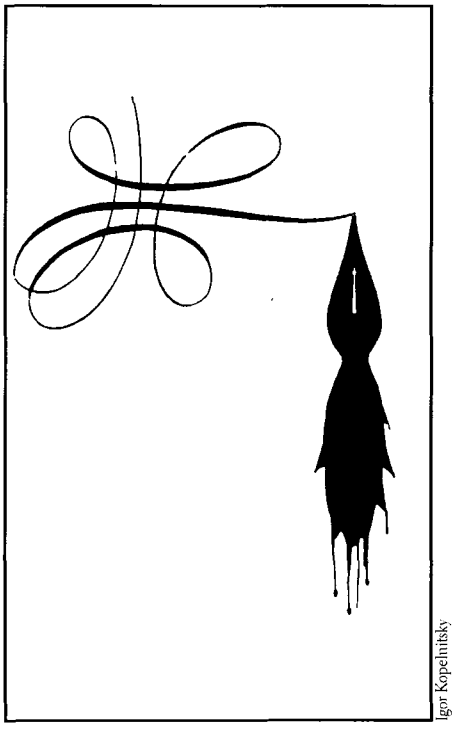
This troubling memoir of James Dickey by his son, Christopher, is troubling as well for me to review because I knew James Dickey a little, and I greatly admire his work. Whether all the scenes in it are true or not—who of us really knew our father and mother?—it is perhaps normal for an admirer to be defensive on his behalf. Let me put more of my cards on the table: James Dickey blurbed two of my books, and my wife, Beverly Jarrett, has published two or three books about him and one by him (*Striking In: The Early Notebooks of James Dickey*), perhaps the last book published in his lifetime.

Before I had so much as heard of the memoir's existence, someone called me to say the *New York Times* had run a review (by the son of a former teacher of mine, incidentally) entitled "Liar and Son." What the hell was going on? Dickey had always had literary enemies (poets are an especially cantankerous bunch at best, at worst vindictive churls), not a few of them in New York, and a presence as powerful as his was bound to challenge the impotent and the second-rate, and even the first-rate. But this attack was by one of his own children.

There is no denying that Dickey drank too much and behaved sometimes outrageously. Many of us do. There is also little doubt that for children to witness their parents quarreling is a terrifying, traumatic experience. Christopher's own son was spared this particular agony by his father's early abandonment of the scene. Jim Dickey's drinking was well documented long before the appearance of this memoir; thus I do not see how piling up stories of his drinking is useful in the pursuit of "truth." Should one be interested in such stories, however, he will find a plentiful supply of them in this book.



Igor Kopelnitsky

Christopher makes much of Jim's penchant for exaggeration, for creating other *personae*. Dickey himself had discussed what he was up to in "Barnstorming for Poetry." He admitted he had a public *persona* and a private one—God help the person who does not. He admitted this was a problematic way to live, or to have to live. He exaggerated when he spoke about flying 100 missions in the Pacific: Although he had soloed and passed his final check (poorly, according to him), he ultimately became a radar intercept officer (according to Christopher) and flew, though not as a pilot,

> thirty-eight combat sorties over thousands of miles of enemy territory and empty, hostile seas. He strafed, he bombed, he acted as bomber escort and provided cover for landing forces and convoy attacks. He was commissioned a lieutenant overseas, and got five bronze stars for offensives in the Philippines, China, Borneo, and Japan.

Goodness! How far from the truth the original was!

At one point in his memoir, Christopher Dickey remarks that "demythologizing was becoming my obsession." He candidly admits his father passed on writing assignments to him that his father did not want to do, thus giving him a start in his current trade. Christopher tells about a commission from *Life* to write about the making of the movie *Deliverance*, a story that eventually was turned down for being "too negative." Must have demythologized too much.

There is an undeclared assumption in a lot of exposé journalism that merely by revealing the private, a purpose is served that is laudable and moral, to say nothing of financial. But even if, via the police state or "police journalism," a camera were placed in every bedroom, every bathroom, when the camera is turned off and the fever of prurience has subsided,

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James Dickey and William Mills at Dickey's Columbia, South Carolina home, 1984.

one still has the burden of meaning, of interpretation, to contend with. Any Jew or Roman walking on the road from Calvary could have given a passerby the details of the recent gory execution of three criminals, but what was the meaning of the event?

Christopher Dickey repeats the well-known words of Monroe Spears to his father: When writing a poem, "no artist is bound by the truth." Of course, between two intelligent and educated men, it was understood that "truth" used in this way meant a literal unfolding of the events that a poem might be based on, but that the poem itself could create another kind of "truth." In discussing the poem "String," Jim explained to his son that he had made up certain of the events. Christopher notes that his father then said, "But you're a journalist. So the truth is important." Christopher replies, "In journalism it is." His father, he said, "considered that proposition for a time, as if waiting for more or better air." What James Dickey might have been waiting for was his son's acknowledgment that the "made-up" poem has its own important truth. From the context, however, the reader is not led to conclude that the memoirist understands this.

Interestingly, Christopher tells how his father did string tricks like Jacob's Ladder for him when he was a child. Like most kids, the son wanted to know how it was "really done." "Teach me to do it." Jim agreed to show him, adding that "the secrets of this magic had to be kept just between us." (If this were an opera, we would hear the basses and cellos presaging a dark final act.) On several occasions, the grown son still seems to miss the point of how poetry is made. Concerning the incident from which "The Bee"—where the father in the poem has to dash to save his son—was developed, Christopher remarks that his father just "took a couple of steps, reached out, and grabbed Kevin to keep him from backing into traffic. That was all that happened." He seems to fault his father for not writing about the time in Italy when he "really had risked his life to save his son."

Summer of Deliverance has some striking inconsistencies. Take, for example, this: "My father's ideas of nature, for all that he wrote about it, were mostly imagined from movies safely watched in air-conditioned theaters." This is a real shot at the poet who wrote so deeply about the natural world. First off, the son was not born until his father was 28 years old, and what Jim did for the next five or six years would be mostly unknown to him, too. James Dickey's father was a fox hunter, and there seems little doubt that his son knew something about rural Georgia. Later in the book, Jim takes Christopher camping, telling him "he had wanted to give me a little something of what his father had given him." About this camping trip, Christopher feels compelled to say (I assume as an adult), "My father knew nothing about camping." Later, about Jim's archery practice, he says, "He just preferred being in the woods."

Only four pages later, Christopher is relating the canoe accident his father and his friends had.

> They'd busted up the canoe in a stretch of rapids on the Coosawattee, a stretch of river they were no-way ready for in a deep, narrow gorge, and Al, banged up badly on the rocks, almost drowned. The canoe had wedged up against him, filling with water, crushing him with the weight of the river. With all his strength and with all my father's strength prying and pushing, he'd only just slipped free.

After this incident, which occurred in Georgia, the Dickeys moved to Oregon where Christopher says, "We still went camping together. . . . We'd drive deep into the mountain forests, which were so much bigger and wilder than anything we'd seen in the Appalachians. . . . Elk wandered in the woods near our camps, and bear were close by, too." (An air-conditioned theater?)

Such inconsistencies and contradictions occur throughout, and I have the feeling that Christopher Dickey, the adult author of this memoir, has not yet completed his journey of reconciliation. The book is very much the story of Christopher Dickey—maybe more, even, than that of his father, who lends it whatever interest it might have. Long-time students of James Dickey will not learn much that is new or essential for understanding Dickey's art. They *will* learn something about one of his children, however. Here is a start: "My childhood was an adventure story, not a horror show. My father and mother had adored and spoiled me." Christopher was an only child for seven years. He was read to often by his father. He writes about how Jim "wanted to share" the magic of the beach with Kevin, the younger son, and did.

The difficulty of providing for his family was not obvious to his sons, yet Dickey worked for an advertising agency during the lean years and worked long hours at night on his poetry. Christopher's childhood was not haunted by talk of poverty, or the reality of it. When Jim made money, he sent his son to France to school, whereupon his son withdrew, came back to the States, and married

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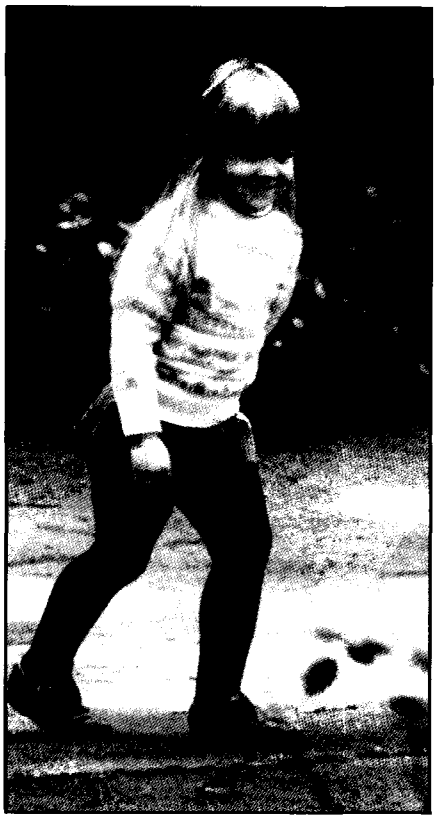

Bronwen Dickey, the poet's daughter, Columbia, South Carolina, 1984.

when he was only 18 years old and had no visible means of support. His father, with the girl's parents, provided for the young couple for five years. Dickey even bought his son a Jaguar XKE. None of this seemed enough, however. "I wanted to believe him when he said he admired me for whatever it was he claimed I'd done well. But every bit of praise was just that bit off target, as if he were talking about somebody else." Nothing will satisfy the spoiled first-born.

There is, of course, a reconciliation at the end of the memoir. James Dickey is dying, and Christopher's second wife (an Italian-American who understands family) urges her husband to see his father. In the midst of Jim's terrible second marriage and his illness, Christopher, with his brother Kevin, steps in and helps put the house in order. There is no gainsaying this, nor do I wish to. His father needed help, as did his young half-sister Bronwen, and Christopher gave it.

This is a book, I think, that should never have been written. But it has been written and must be looked at for what it is, and not as a work of the imagination by which writers licitly transmute family experience into art. Christopher Dickey allows praise for his father, but somehow the words are undercut—taken away sometimes subtly, sometimes not so subtly. An opening sentence tells us, "My father was a great poet, a famous novelist, a powerful intellect, and a son of a bitch I hated." Nothing subtle there. Later in the book, Christopher calls him a "cracker bard." Part of this hatred comes from the way he says his father treated his mother. Fair enough. A son ought to defend his mother. And his father. Adultery is a cruel business, a betrayal. As he tries to come to terms with his father and mother, Christopher Dickey admits his mother could have left. After all, it was her second marriage. Christopher blames his mother's drinking on his father's drinking. But Maxine's mother was a big drinker. The two women drank together.

For a tell-all exposé to carry authority, the writer must tell *all* he knows, unless what he really wants to do is an ax job disguised as praise. Christopher Dickey admits that he committed adultery himself while married to his first wife, drank excessively, and put his career ahead of his second marriage, staying overseas for months. Why didn't he, to be fair, provide the sordid details of his own marital fights, the seamy specifics of his own adultery? Probably because they would embarrass him by making him look bad. He may have even wanted to protect members of his family, to be loyal to them.

On a car trip from Louisiana to Washington, D.C., in 1984, my wife and I stopped in Columbia, South Carolina, to visit with Jim. During dinner the first night, he mentioned that Christopher was in El Salvador as a journalist. I made an idle remark that, as far as the government was concerned, journalists and Catholic priests were considered the enemy down there. At first, misunderstanding what I had said, he thought I intended something negative about Christopher. Leaping to his son's defense, he protested, as I recall, that he knew which side he was on and affirmed what he would do if the government dared to mess with his son. His fierce loyalty was touching. But Christopher would call this "an excuse for his overplayed emotions."

The next morning at breakfast, which was to have been fixed by Jim's second wife, Deborah, (who would not, however, emerge from the bedroom), Jim read his long, rhymed poem about Bronwen, his young daughter. This was the only time I ever saw her. She was quite a charmer at three or four, and I photographed her. Her father died when she was 15, and she wrote a one-page memorial to him in the March 24, 1997, issue of *Newsweek* that is precociously brilliant. It is hanging for all the writing students to see at the University of Arkansas.

Seeing him dying in the hospital, Bronwen broke into tears and thought:

> Here was the man that changed my diapers, made me peanut-butter sandwiches (with the crusts cut off), showed me how to throw knives and to shoot a bow, read me poetry, stayed up with me all night when I was sick, taught me to play chess, came to all my recitals, braided my hair, watched movies with me, checked my homework.

She is left, she says, with memories of greatness, the greatness of a father. Bronwen concludes, using some of Jim's favorite quotations,

> I will live blindly and upon the hour. I will catch the dream in flight, though I do not know the color of the sky. And my father's eyes, though they will not see my graduation, my marriage or my children, will always be somewhat strangely more than blue.

I must say I think Christopher's much younger sister has written the better memoir, even if it is only a single page in length. Among Jim's last words to Christopher were, "Remember what I was—to you." Yes, indeed: remember. Even talk—among the family and close friends—about the bad times, if it seems necessary for you to do so. As for ridicule and attack, there will be strangers aplenty to volunteer for the job. Especially to "demythologize." What we need more of are mythmakers to take the debris of the banal and commonplace and fashion stories to lift our eyes from the ground to the horizon, "to catch the dream in flight"—more people who understand the meanings of the myths.

If one is going to criticize one's parents in public, one should have the courage to do so while they are alive to defend themselves. Otherwise, the secrets should be kept among the family as the magic itself is honored, by the confidants of blood. ©

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The Lady From Niger

by William R. Hawkins

There once was a lady from Niger

Who smiled as she rode on a tiger.

They returned from the ride

With the lady inside

And the smile on the face of the tiger.

—Ogden Nash

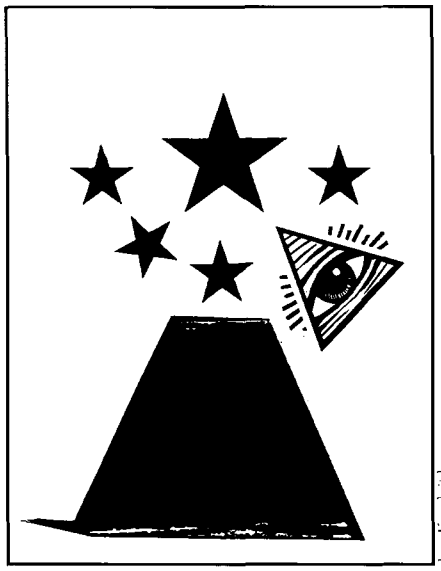
East and West:
China, Power and the Future of Asia
by Christopher Patten
New York: Times Books;
304 pp., $25.00

◆

Christopher Patten warns at the start that his engagingly written book is not a memoir. Though the core of it deals with the author's tenure as the British Empire's final governor of Hong Kong (1992-1997), Patten employs an impressionistic and anecdotal approach that is better suited to interpreting history than merely to recording it. In this he performs a valuable service. Toward the end of the book, however, as he attempts to peer into the future, Patten strays from the path of experience into the theoretical world of political economy in ways that seem to contradict the strongest parts of his earlier argument.

The emergence of a more active China in world affairs troubles Christopher Patten.

> Chinese society bears many of the hallmarks of early-twentieth-century fascism. . . . The military is very powerful; the tentacles of the Party (a clan of interconnected family interests, not an ideological movement) entwines every aspect of commercial life; nationalism and xenophobia have replaced moral zeal; the state is supreme.



Igor Kopelnitsky

Peking (which Patten uses in preference to Beijing "because there is a word in the English language for China's capital") has shown an increased assertiveness by its rapid military build-up and its threats against its neighbors. "China is rapidly becoming a threat to world peace," he warns, "as well as an affront to our civilized conscience and an unfair competitor in global markets." Patten advises the West to

> stop cossetting China; use access to our markets as a carrot for good behavior and a stick for bad; stand unequivocally by Taiwan; keep up our military strength in the region; encourage Asian countries to keep up their own guard; speak out for the oppressed of China and work for freedom there; press China in every international forum to improve its behavior; refuse China "face" until China improves its behavior.

Patten's is less a policy of "containment" than it is one of "disengagement": The West should not contribute to China's rise until the "inevitable" tide of liberalism transforms Peking into a capital that can be trusted. Though he does not believe George Kennan's admonition "to have as little to do with China as possible" is as practicable as it was 50 years ago, nevertheless, "Kennan's arguments cast at least a shadow of wisdom over current fixations." In the near term, Patten is not scared "witless" by the People's Republic of China because it still lags well behind the West, while, in the long run, he is optimistic: "China is at an end of an era. . . . What more does the Communist Party have to offer than cynicism and decadence?" The problem is—as always—maneuvering successfully from the near term to the long run. It has become fashionable to predict that China will become a liberal democracy in 15 or 20 years. The same, however, could have been said of Nazi Germany in 1938, and the prediction would have turned out to have been right; but Germany came to democracy by way of war and subjugation.

German democracy is not the product

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of private enterprise and economic interdependence, as proponents of the United States' present "engagement" policy argue will be the course in China. Indeed, Patten sees the Chinese business interest as a principal obstacle to national reform. The governor's campaign in Hong Kong to create institutions of democracy and civil liberties to combat Chinese despotism earned him a reputation for being "bad for business," while both Western and local businessmen felt that trade with China depended on keeping in the government's good graces: "Political harmony was essential to business profits." The head of a large British international bank warned Patten that he would mobilize other businessmen to boycott the Conservative Party unless the governor retreated from his reform program, while media mogul Rupert Murdoch canceled HarperCollins' publishing contract with Patten upon learning that his book was critical of a Chinese regime with which Murdoch has strong—and growing—business ties.

Local entrepreneurs, whose rise to prominence is supposed to transform China, have proved no more independent. Patten calls Hong Kong businessmen (many of whom joined the General Chamber of Commerce in the legislature "to do their patriotic duty" on behalf of Peking) "shoe shiners" of the Peking regime. Thus, it was not difficult for Peking to recruit a billionaire shipping magnate as its Hong Kong satrap. The subservience of Hong Kong businessmen calls into question the argument of American businessmen that the continued appeasement of China is in Hong Kong's best interest.

As transnational business interests have gained political influence in Western capitals, it is not surprising that China has become adept at manipulating the international situation. "Sophistication is not required," Patten says.

> Europe is played off against America; one European country is played off against another. Chinese views of the venality of the Western world, and of the controlling influence there of business lobbyists, must be one of the few aspects of modern life that continues to give any relevance or vitality to Marxist and Maoist thought.

The notion that foreign policy should focus on boosting the overseas prospects of nominally domestic business firms is far too narrow and short-sighted even if one construes national interest—or world order—purely in material terms. Patten cites two common instances in which the desires of business run counter to national security. One is the sale of nuclear technology to China, where it will not only be used to improve Peking's nuclear arsenal but also be passed on to other regimes hostile to Western interests. The other one is the running up of huge trade surpluses, "part of which are spent [by Peking] on modernizing its military hardware," while the West pretends it has no idea what is happening.

Yet, having blasted international business firms for their myopic greed and their baneful influence on government policies, Patten endorses the classical liberal theory of "free trade" as the stance appropriate to Western democratic governments in the future. By defining "free trade" as the conduct of business "free" from concerns for higher issues, whether moral or strategic, Patten typifies the confusion among mainstream conservatives who embrace capitalism in principle while professing to be appalled by the lack of principle among capitalists. The solution, of course, to this supposed impasse is to acknowledge that, since business acts like business, government must act like government in protecting the national interest from all dangers, foreign and domestic—including those posed by business.

From the perspective of Hong Kong, "free trade" is a vital concept: As a city-state, Hong Kong had no alternative to a trade-dependent strategy. This has always been the plight of small states lacking the resources or population base to do more than play their part in the international division of labor. In times of general prosperity, and under the protection of larger powers, city-states can prosper. But because they lack the power to control the wider environment, they are extremely vulnerable to economic turmoil and political pressure: Hong Kong could not insulate itself from the Asian financial meltdown any more than it could maintain its independence from China. Great powers, by contrast, *do* have alternatives, which is what makes them great. The continental spread of the United States, with 265 million well-educated and affluent citizens developing and using state-of-the-art technology, makes it much less dependent on the "global" economy. With one-third of that economy in recession—the third most directly involved in "free trade"—the advantages held by a large country with a diverse industrial and commercial base have again become apparent.

Americans should be grateful that the United States is not Hong Kong. Yet the Clinton administration has attempted to emulate Hong Kong and the other Asian "tigers" by plunging into economic globalism. As the U.S. trade representative saw it in 1996, America was "a mature economy with few domestic opportunities for growth." The fatal flaw in this pessimistic view is that it was *always* American consumer demand which fueled the export boom in Asia, not the other way around. The over-investment in export-oriented production all along the Pacific Rim drove down prices and profits, leading to loan defaults and currency devaluations on a massive scale.

Patten, who has yet to learn from the history of his own country, believes that "protectionism tries to stop the clock" and leads to "the delayed introduction of new technology." But this is what happened in England at the dawn of the century, when British policy embraced "free trade" with a passion bordering on religious zeal. In his new work, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*, economic historian David Landes attributes England's decline to the loss of export markets by an economy based on exports. Without an assured market, investment in new products and industrial methods waned. New occupations did arise, particularly in services, but, as Landes notes, "these new lines may not have the same social and economic values as older employments" (i.e., selling potato chips is not the economic equivalent of making computer chips).

The irony is that China, another continental-sized state that does not practice anything akin to "free trade," will accelerate its rise to power as the Pacific Rim slides into depression. This shift in the regional balance of power will be aided by an American policy that continues to favor China at the expense of our natural allies on the Rim, refusing to intervene against the transnational corporations in order to fashion a strategy that brings moral values, national security, and economic policy into harmony.

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Psychological Phenomena

by Paul Gottfried

Political Tolerance: Balancing Community and Diversity
by Robert Weissberg
Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications;
272 pp., $54.00

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Robert Weissberg's study of tolerance will not bring him academic good will, and the drab appearance of this volume will not attract a sufficient number of potentially favorable readers to make its author justly famous. So much the worse! The book is written with flair, even occasional humor, and offers riveting arguments regarding the changing definitions of tolerance and the social consequences thereof.

Having critically surveyed the professional literature on "tolerance" written since mid-century, Weissberg concludes that the term has undergone a dramatic but widely accepted shift in meaning. Whereas tolerance was once a privilege extended by majority religions or dominant political as well as ethnic groups toward partly dissimilar minorities, it has now become a human right that white Westerners—male Christian ones, in particular—must accord to others. And it is not a courtesy to be extended grudgingly or performed as an act of *noblesse oblige*. Rather, tolerance has come to mean making those who are defiantly and self-consciously different feel good about themselves, while blaming oneself for their previous lack of self-esteem. Thus, where gays and leftist revolutionaries are concerned, Weissberg notes, "political resistance" to their positions has now been equated with "intolerance." Quoting from the publications of the Human Rights Campaign, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, and other advocates of alternative lifestyles represented in both national parties, Weissberg proves that tolerance has ceased to signify even "robust accommodation." "Authentic tolerance" requires more: "that unsavory causes be promoted to qualify ourselves as a genuinely accepting society."

Weissberg makes another relevant historical observation. Well into the 20th century, both the battle for and the practice of tolerance had to do mainly with the acceptance of religious minorities or the non-persecution of heterodox opinions. Thus the Prussian monarchy in the 18th century was considered tolerant for allowing Catholics and Protestants who did not belong to the state church to reside in its territory. Some of the American colonies gained reputations for tolerance when they allowed English Catholics, Spanish Jews, or German Anabaptists to settle among the dominant religious groups, and, in some cases, to hold political office. Weissberg points to the Christian and Jewish millets in the Muslim Ottoman Empire and to the coexistence of Orthodox Jewish and Arab Muslim communities in Brooklyn as further examples of traditional tolerance. Though none of these groups had (or have) much to do with neighboring ones or with the majority society, they did (or continue to) coexist and "tolerate" each other's presence. Though the American Constitution denies to the federal government the power to establish a church or to suppress political or religious dissent in the states, until recently tolerance had extremely close limits in the United States as elsewhere. State and local governments supported the majority Christian—usually Protestant—attitudes, and while offensive dissent was not often criminalized (except in time of war), the way to success for most Americans was to avoid trampling on prevailing Judeo-Christian beliefs. The Scopes trial exemplified how state legislatures dealt with "anti-biblical" views in the American constitutional republic.

Weissberg does not argue that we are a more open society for refusing state legislatures the right to ban the teaching of evolution. Rather, he strongly suggests that our intelligentsia and our government now promote a definition of tolerance so bizarre as to result in unprecedented behavioral and verbal restraints. Most Americans are browbeaten into honoring expressive freedoms attached to particular activists for whose positions they have no special fondness and indeed might have moral repugnance. Tolerance now means the forced enthusiastic expression of support for kinky lifestyles, explicitly leftist reconstructions of society, or abrasive members of designated victim groups: "[C]laims of unmerciful victimization bestow a steady flow of government-mandated benefits, from easier victories in wrongful employment termination to selective exemption from law enforcement."

The single bone to be picked with Weissberg's otherwise perceptive study is a methodological one. His examples of the new tolerance are drawn largely from academic experience and academic writings, and the point to which he keeps

Political Tolerance: Balancing Community and Diversity

"By education or public indoctrination, the state remolds citizens to cure the defect [of intolerance], in principle superficially no different from public health informational anti-smoking programs. Teachers, administrators, publishers, program developers, and additional components of 'the therapeutic state,' guided by government bureaucracies, assist in eradicating this undemocratic flaw. Researchers are not the ones who demand vigorous state action; that would be inappropriate by disciplinary standards. Rather, scholarship reinforces the rationale for such intervention by scientifically depicting the problem's definition."

—*Robert Weissberg*

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returning is that one is dealing here with a "psychological phenomenon" found among "self-defined victims" and their proponents. Weissberg is right about all of this, but he misses the political context that shapes such behavior. As Lino Graglia has repeatedly asked: What would our universities be like if the federal government, directly and through the states, did not impose affirmative action? The answer must be: very different. Affirmative action is the entering wedge for mandated "diversity training," the creation of "non-hostile" work and living environments for minorities, and nonstop sensitivity classes.

Weissberg is correct in saying that such coercive policies work well in the screwball environment in which he and I perform our jobs. But the social deviants we meet there would not be having their way were it not for government steadily endorsing their projects, any more than the Waffen-SS would have been honored as servants of the German state 60 years before Hitler. The administrative class promotes "tolerance" for its own interest, which requires turning middle-class communities into collections of therapeutic subjects. And a highly useful means toward that end is the sanctification of the "psychological tolerance" examined by Weissberg. The demand for ecstatic public acceptance of what until quite recently would have seemed lunatic and perverted to everyone interferes, as Weissberg shows, with traditional community and the social space in which it must function. That is the reason state managers, who are busy eradicating the institutional and cultural past, push for the new tolerance and impose it on their client-subjects, descended from what once were American citizens.

Weissberg intermittently makes this observation, while accepting the notion that public administration is being driven by radical pressure groups in an intolerant direction. My own reading of the situation is less optimistic: that a revolutionary central state favors and funds whatever wackiness increases its hold on society.

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A Beautiful Friendship

by Mark Royden Winchell

Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren: A Literary Correspondence
Edited by James A. Grimshaw, Jr.
Columbia: University of Missouri Press; 444 pp., $39.95

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The story of their first meeting has been told so many times that it has become part of the folklore of modern Southern literature. One day, during the fall of 1924, Robert Penn Warren stopped by Kissam Hall on the Vanderbilt campus to visit his friend and classmate Saville Clark. With Clark was his new roommate, a freshman named Cleanth Brooks. Although only a year and a half older than Brooks, the precocious Warren was already a senior and an important member of the group of poets that called themselves "Fugitives." Despite his local eminence, "Red" Warren took enough of an interest in his new acquaintance to look at one of Cleanth's freshman themes and to compliment him on his "natural style." As Humphrey Bogart said to Claude Rains at the end of *Casablanca*, it was the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

That friendship flourished for the next 65 years, ending only with Warren's death on September 14, 1989. For most of this time, the two men were in close proximity to one another. When Brooks arrived at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar in October 1929, Warren had already been there a year. Over the next 12 months, they became much better acquainted than they had been at Vanderbilt. Then, from 1934 to 42, they were colleagues in the English department at Louisiana State University. During the last seven of those years, they edited the original series of the *Southern Review*. By 1947, Brooks was teaching at Yale, where he was joined by Warren in 1950; they would be neighbors in Connecticut for the next four decades.

Because both men (particularly Warren) traveled a good deal, it was necessary for them to keep in touch through the mail. James A. Grimshaw, Jr.'s recent edition of over 350 letters exchanged by Brooks and Warren for better than half a century helps us see something of the private personalities of two distinguished public writers. The greater value of this volume, however, lies in the perspective it gives us on a working relationship unique in 20th-century literature. John Palmer, who knew both men long and well, said that they reminded him not so much of two agreeable colleagues as of two different parts of the same person. Warren was a brainstorming genius. When he was at work, the surrounding area soon became a mess. He would jot an idea or an image down on a piece of paper, wad that paper up, and start again with a fresh sheet. Very few of the wads ever made it to the wastebasket. In contrast, Brooks kept a tidier desk and a more orderly mind. If Warren's light could be as blinding and diffuse as the sun itself, Brooks' was more like a laser beam—less primal but more focused. This partnership produced, in addition to the *Southern Review*, a series of textbooks that would change the way American students studied literature.

Although *Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren: A Literary Correspondence* is a valuable scholarly resource for anyone interested in the mechanics of editorial collaboration, the magic of the friendship shared by Brooks and Warren does not come across as often as it might had they been separated for longer periods of time: Because they could so easily enjoy each other's company, letters did not have to serve as a poor substitute. One can find more literary gossip in Brooks' correspondence with Robert Heilman, who was stuck a continent away at the University of Washington. More brilliant discussions of literary theory are contained in the letters Brooks exchanged with Allen Tate and Murray Krieger. When Cleanth and Red wrote to each other, they usually meant business.

The history of the original *Southern Review* has been capably recorded in Thomas Cutrer's *Parnassus on the Mississippi*. What becomes evident from the correspondence in Grimshaw's volume is the degree to which Cleanth Brooks was the workhorse who kept that journal going while Red Warren was away from campus (spending a guest semester at another university or the summer in Italy) and the *Review*'s nominal editor, Charles Pipkin, was drinking himself to death. Fortunately, Cleanth had the assistance

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of two business managers who would later go on to become distinguished editors in their own right. During his career at Random House, Albert Erskine's clients included William Faulkner, Eudora Welty, Ralph Ellison, James Michener, John O'Hara, and William Styron, as well as Erskine's own mentor, Red Warren. Albert's successor in Baton Rouge was John Palmer, who would later edit both the *Sewanee Review* and the *Yale Review*. For a time, the magazine's secretary was the future novelist Jean Stafford. The entire enterprise, made possible in large part by the largesse of the Huey Long machine, came to an end when the Kingfish was shot and less imaginative politicians took his place. After the *Southern Review* was suspended in 1942, ostensibly in deference to war-time austerity, the football team's tiger mascot continued to live in a heated cage and consume choice cuts of meat.

The demise of the *Southern Review* so demoralized Red Warren that he promptly accepted a position at the University of Minnesota, where he received the promotion and higher salary that had been denied him at LSU. By this time, he had published two novels and an impressive body of poetry, while Cleanth's first book on literature, *Modern Poetry and the Tradition* (1939), had established him as one of the most influential and controversial critics of his time. The two men had also collaborated on three textbooks that would revolutionize the teaching of literature in American colleges. This aspect of their career developed almost by accident. Teaching at a land grant university in one of the less cosmopolitan regions of the country, Brooks and Warren discovered that many of their students simply did not know how to read literature. Often the plain prose meaning of the text eluded them. Even when that was not the case, they were frequently ignorant of the literary devices that make a poem more than its paraphrasable prose content.

Unfortunately, the available textbooks were of little help. Anyone teaching Keats' "Ode to a Nightingale" from the most popular classroom anthology of the day, *The College Omnibus*, had to be content with a short biographical introduction and a dollop of impressionistic response. ("The song of the nightingale brings sadness and exhilaration to the poet and makes him long to be lifted up and away from the limitations of life. The seventh stanza is particularly beautiful.") In desperation, Warren prepared a 30-page mimeographed booklet on metrics and imagery, which he and Brooks used in the spring semester of 1935. By the fall of 1936, this had developed into a critical anthology of poetry, fiction, drama, and expository prose they called *An Approach to Literature*. In 1975, 40 years after its original publication, *An Approach to Literature* went into its fifth edition.

The two textbooks that followed, *Understanding Poetry* and *Understanding Fiction*, were even more influential. Even as the New Criticism associated with Brooks, Warren, and others fell out of fashion, it continued to inform the undergraduate teaching of literature. Douglas Bush spoke more truly than he realized when he dismissed the New Criticism as "an advanced course in remedial reading."

The one Brooks and Warren textbook that failed to meet expectations was *American Literature: The Makers and the Making*, a magisterial anthology that Cleanth and Red compiled with their Yale colleague R.W.B. Lewis. This book ran to two million words, a fourth of which consisted of commentary by the editors. The result was not just a standard classroom anthology but a critical history of American literature from the 17th century to the present. If anything, the book may have been too good. More than a few teachers have had their students buy less imposing anthologies and then cribbed their lecture notes from Brooks, Lewis, and Warren. Even though this anthology did not make its editors as much money as it should have, working on it demonstrated the essentially social nature of literary criticism. The best criticism often arises from the meeting of kindred spirits to talk about books. Among other things, the collective experience of putting together *American Literature: The Makers and the Making* convinced R.W.B. Lewis of "an irreducible subsurface of regionality in American literary folk." As the three colleagues began discussing the mid-19th century, Lewis got "the eerie but enlivening sensation that we were, between us, reenacting the Civil War." Brooks and Warren seemed to him to become increasingly Southern. "To my ears their very accents thickened," Lewis recalls,

> and though I am in fact Chicago-born, I felt myself becoming more and more northern and even, like Emily Dickinson, beginning to see "New Englandly." When Warren presented us with his selection of Melville's war poems, I remarked that to judge from this lot—all of them from northern defeats and disasters—one would be in doubt as to which side had actually "won" the war.

Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren were part of a remarkable generation of literary figures born within half a dozen years of the turn of the century. Even if we should eventually look upon their like again, it is doubtful that we will discover so voluminous a correspondence. Brooks and Warren lived most of their lives before phoning long distance was a commonplace occurrence, and I doubt that either man ever used e-mail. Even as our means of communication have become more efficient, a certain civility has been lost. Cleanth and Red were good men as well as great critics. Eavesdropping on their written conversations with each other helps confirm the measure of our loss.

Mark Royden Winchell, who teaches English at Clemson University, was the 1997 recipient of the Warren-Brooks Award for Literary Criticism.

LIBERAL ARTS

A REAL PAGE-TURNER

"O'Neill's book breaks new ground. The overall structure of the argument is very attractive and convincing: moving between Rawls's monological impartialism and Walzer's dialogical contextualism to open a space for Habermas's discourse ethics. I honestly couldn't put it down."

—*from a cover blurb for Shane O'Neill's* Impartiality in Context: Grounding Justice in a Pluralist World *(State University of New York Press, 1997)*

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Letter From the Argentario

by Andrei Navrozov

The Princesses and the Pea

◆

The sun is no longer the hot buttered pancake worshipped by the ancient Slavs: It has been reformed into an altogether more Christian, Lenten, and distant figure. The sea is still beautiful, though it too no longer moves with the same pagan frankness, its orgiastic, by turns manic and depressive, barometrically motivated summer feasts and famines having given way to that reflective coherence of cloistered life which a weekend visitor, who has not personally witnessed the seasonal conversion, is likely to misconstrue as stormy gloom. Wherever you look, royal aquamarines and emeralds in the Argentario's crown are being switched for Siberian jaspers and beryls, and despite the cheering news that the substitution cuts down the cost of being embosomed in some of the most expensive nature on the Tyrrhenian coast, all the terraces are now emptying, Filipino maids are handing in the keys, and even I am making inquiries about where to go next.

Franco is working on it with all the aplomb of "*Ci penso io*!" for which the Italian service sector is justly famous. This is a combination of "I'll see to it, just leave it to me, I have your interests in mind, everything will be taken care of, we understand each other, I know just what you're looking for, don't you worry about anything, I've got a friend, he has a cousin, they have an uncle" with the underlying sense of "And if in the end I should fail, we'll have a good laugh about it, won't we?" The hero of my last two letters from the Argentario, Franco likes to play the quintessential southern nepotist while achieving his ends by hard work, which he does in secret, and endless telephoning. Some years back, I read an article about a Robin Hood of a confidence man who ran an elaborate pyramid scheme for the benefit of the very people he was swindling all over America, so that a free car would be procured for one client at the expense of another, both clients having had to pay the price of a third client's free pleasure cruise. This side of madness and the law, Franco is the nearest equivalent of that American: He has just sent faxes detailing my predicament to every real-estate agent in Siena while telling me that he is well acquainted with the city because he used to visit a girl there with splendid, let us say, results.

Last year, I made the mistake of telling the social grandees of Porto Ercole, who wanted to know whither their charming Russian acquaintance once the sirocco starts, that I wanted to spend some time in Rome or Florence, and that "Franco is working on it." Franco? Ha-ha-ha, they laughed bitterly, that fellow Franco has a long arm, nobody can deny that, but surely not as long as their own Rome or their cousins' Florence. Tee-hee-hee, tinkled a young Count Cucciolini. Hoo-hoo-hoo, boomed a Duke Ognibrontolo. Ho-ho-ho, hooted a Prince Dottodei Settenani. Why don't I speak to *their* cousin, or daughter's friend, or daughter's friend's agent? *That* would be wise. Because to rent a summer place, like all those despicable film producers and glorified grocers who are jacking up prices all over, a local fixer may be enough, but when it comes to residence in town, thank God one must still be presented to society.

I did speak to them, and the scenario was invariably the same. After a while, I began telling the grandees "Franco is working on it" just to get their goat, so hilariously indignant and flustered they became at the thought of his arm lengthening, like the shadow of the specter that is haunting Europe, to reach into their ancestral domain and pocket a fat commission. Yes, I would insist with feigned *bonhomie*, Franco will find me a place, I'm sure. No, your friend's cousin's house didn't work out, because first of all she is deaf, though not so deaf as to desist from bargaining, and secondly she said she didn't want to move out because her mother's things were in the house and she couldn't bear the thought of other people touching them. But don't worry, Franco will find something sooner or later. He says he is working on it.

No, that noble lady's brother-in-law's friend's recommendation didn't work out either. The place was too small and had no terrace, though like all the apartments in the inescapable scenario, it was tucked into an amazing Roman palazzo overlooking an architectural monument of still greater antiquity. It was a brilliant morning in early October, I stood by the window admiring the view and said I would take it, and no sooner were the words out of my mouth than the owner raised the price we had agreed on by phone just the night before. In her mistaken, though obviously not newly acquired, belief that useless information is a fair alternative to straight dealing, she explained to me that her ailing husband, who had just left for the airport, begged her, simply begged her, not to let anyone, not even the charming Russian acquaintance of her dear friend in Porto Ercole, have the apartment for less.

That evening, I'm at the bar as usual for an aperitif and a gossip with Franco. "*Ah, pisellino*," he greets me, enjoying my customary uncertainty about whether a little pea is quite as endearing a thing to be called as the other little thing is offensive, "*come andato*?" The princess tried to pull a fast one, I tell him. "Did you show the old bag you liked it? You stood by the window and admired the view of some broken stones? Still greater antiquity? Nothing is of greater antiquity than *la principessa*, my friend! *Pisellino*, what did I teach you?" He gets up from the table and begins to recite: "*Al contadino*" (here he always raises the index finger of his right hand) "*non far sapere*" (pause) "*come è buono*" (mischievous twinkle) "*il cacio con le pere*" (triumphant laughter). Which, in the didactic style of another century, we may render as follows:

> From farmer hide, lest he gets airs,
> How excellent his cheese with
> pears.

Anyway, for this, that, or another reason it would by then be perfectly clear that yet another Roman palazzo, or yet another vaulted gallery with frescoed walls and a Jacuzzi, or yet another Fiesole vil-

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la with a musical fountain that is also a clock was but an unattainable social mirage, and the whole scenario would repeat itself, I goading the nobility of Porto Ercole with Franco's ever-lengthening arm and they sending me on an ever-wilder goose chase. Meanwhile, time was running out, and Franco seemed to be spending night after night on his many mobile phones without any apparent result.

Then one day in November, with the sirocco long in place, terrace umbrellas all folded, and even the bar officially closed except to make me a morning cappuccino, at last Franco ordered me into his Asti Spumante or whatever his spiffy car is called. We were bound for Rome, for the apartment—two terraces on two floors overlooking the Trevi fountain on one side and, no less crushingly undeserved, the Baroque façade of the Church of San Vincenzo on the other—where I began this correspondence last year. The owner was a very tanned middle-aged man, his hairy arms covered with interesting tattoos, who lived there with his wife, his two teenage sons, and his mother-in-law. While the elderly lady and her daughter, relegated to the kitchen background, were rolling the pasta and cutting the smoked pig's jowl for an *amatriciana* that I will remember for as long as I live, the owner, the agent, and the little pea of a woebegone tenant were working out the finances with a broken ball-point pen on a paper napkin. This done, both parties licked their thumbs and, laughing at the grimy imprints, affixed them to the grand total with mock solemnity.

A contract? Aw, have another helping, my friend. A security deposit? Pfph, what for, I know where you live! How to pay? In *sterline*, of course, from beautiful foggy London with those marvelous bridges! When can I move in? As soon as we've moved out! And, as readers of this correspondence know, that's exactly how it all turned out. And need I add what a fabulous boon it was, being able to ask all those Port'Ercole grandees to drinks on the terrace, waiting . . . waiting . . . waiting to be asked the six-billion-*lire* question . . . and by the way how did you find this amazing place . . . oh, well, do you remember Franco . . . yes, well, but I told you he would find me something suitable in Rome . . . yes, he found it straight away . . . yes, a single telephone call. Curtain. A shocked audience. A huge line at the coat-check.

But what every picaresque social comedy needs is a sobering afterpiece. The tattooed owner of the apartment in the Piazza della Fontana di Trevi, as I learned by chance on my last day there, is out on bail and awaiting trial for his part in the assassination of an associate of the Vatican banker Calvi, the man found hanged under Blackfriars Bridge in London some years ago. On me personally this piece of news had the salutary, and not entirely familiar, effect of goading me to make sure that all outstanding utility bills had been paid, but as far as Franco is concerned, there is nothing more sinister here than a funny coincidence. And as the sirocco begins to bear down on the exposed village on the Argentario hillside, I can hardly wait to hear what this year's frantic telephoning will bring.

Andrei Navrozov is Chronicles' *European correspondent.*

Letter From England

by Christie Davies

Winnie the Pooh Is an American

◆

Winnie the Pooh and his friends Piglet, Rabbit, Tigger, Kanga, Roo, and Eeyore live happily in a comfortable bullet-proof home in the New York Public Library and have done so for many years. They have never expressed any desire to return to the Hundred Acre Wood or Pooh-stick bridge or the North Pole, the scenes of their famous adventures. Like many other famous British emigrants, from Paul Jones to Charlie Chaplin to Andrew Carnegie to Bob Hope, they have become patriotic American citizens. Yet in a sense they didn't need to, for Pooh, Piglet, and Rabbit at least were already truly American. Tigger was Indian, and Kanga and Roo, Australians. Only Eeyore is truly British—perhaps he alone should be sent back to England to quell the Britishers' agitation for the animals' return. He never quite fit in with the others and always sought to stay in sad, wet, morose places—like Britain itself. Pooh, by contrast, is entirely at home in New York and now proudly uses his truly American name of Pooh all the time. He has discarded the fluvial upper-class name of Sanders, under which he was forced to live in snobbish old England.

Pooh and Piglet are American figures battling in the wilderness against natural calamity. Piglet's heroism in escaping from Owl's house to get help after it had been felled by a hurricane was truly American, as was Pooh's rescue of Piglet from the floods by riding the rapids on a fragile, floating honey-pot. Such challenges rarely exist in the bland British climate of perpetual drizzle.

Both of these heroes display a rugged individualism that is especially American even in these politically correct times. After Piglet had been forcibly scrubbed clean by the stereotypical hygiene-obsessed Australian Kanga, he immediately asserted his independence in an authentically American way by rolling in the dirt all the way home. He is clearly the ancestor of Charlie Brown's friend Pigpen in that most American of comic strips, *Peanuts*. Pooh, too, is American in his self-reliance and self-sufficiency. When that typically effusive and emotional Englishman, Christopher Robin, declared, "Oh bear, I do love you," Pooh replied, "So do I." Only an American could have said that. Indeed, when the Winnie the Pooh books were translated into German and Latin, it proved impossible to render the full force of this very American reply.

Pooh is American in his addiction to stoutness exercises, performed in front of the mirror, that have no effect at all on the solid girth which led to his becoming stuck in the entrance to Rabbit's house and suffering the ignominy of having his ankles used as a lapine (or, if you prefer, cunniculine) towel rack and dryer. He failed to see that no amount of squash-

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Eat at
Lee's Chinese Restaurant
3443 N. Main Street

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ing, iron-pumping, and track-suited jogging in trainers can protect the excessive honey (or McHoney) guzzler from becoming as portly as Louis the Handsome. Only in America.

If Pooh and Piglet represent the rugged Western frontier and the "hawg-raising" South of America respectively, Rabbit represents the very core of the nation, Washington D.C. Rabbit ain't Babbitt. Rabbit's obsessive and useless fussing and organizing of other people places him firmly in the management structure of a great American bureaucracy such as the FDA, and his expensive failure to "unbounce" Tigger was worthy of the CIA. His endless search for positions for his numerous friends and relatives makes him very much a Washington figure.

It is clear, then, that the militant Britishers who are agitating for Pooh and his friends to be extradited to some obscure English museum are utterly mistaken. If the toys were returned, the Limey climate would soon rot them with mildew, and the absence of bullet-proof glass would leave them unprotected against terrorist assassination. Can't those stupid Britishers see that, if Pooh is repatriated, they will lose far more to other countries than they will gain from America? The Greeks will demand the return of Elgin's hoard, and the British will lose their marbles; the Egyptians will cry for their mummies; the great gold throne of the MacHales, the last high kings of Munster, will have to be sent back to Ireland, and the Babylonian manuscript of the Book of Daniel to Saddam's Iraq. In the end, an empty British Museum will be turned into a spare-parts warehouse for the flood of Korean automobiles that Britain imports every year.

What can be done to placate the wretched Britishers? In the short run, it would help if a philanthropic American were to buy up all the copies of the revolting Disney film of Winnie the Pooh, destroy them, and obtain an agreement from Disney never to film the Pooh stories again. The British audiences who saw the film—with its appalling interposed gopher—thought it was typically American. They were unable to see that Disney was simply a crass, mental-diabetes-inducing schmalz-meister and that his film was far less authentically American than A.A. Milne's original works. Destroying Disney will help restore Anglo-American amity.

In the long run, though, the only answer is for America to invite Britain to join the United States and to turn its constituent peoples into four new states of the union, each with a star on the American flag. America will obtain a vital permanent military base and an economic asset on the very edge of Europe and reinforce its position as the world's richest and most powerful nation by gaining 60 million new, peaceable, loyal English-speaking citizens. This would also save Britain from extinction due to secession by the new and belligerent Scottish and Welsh parliaments, the political unrest that will follow the impending abolition of the monarchy by Labour, and Britain's departure from the European Union under the Conservatives. A dismembered, disinherited, and isolated Britain will have nowhere to go except into the arms of the United States. The prodigal father will have come home. On that happy day, Britain will become as American as Pooh, and provincial tourists from London will visit his home at Pooh Corner in New York as easily as if they had come from Seattle or Albuquerque.

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Under *Fleurs-de-Lis*

by John Nixon, Jr.

The Kings of France migrated from Versailles
And Fontainebleau to democratic quarters
In the *World Book*. So adolescent I,
Who greatly cared about such regal matters,
Was soon a neighbor and a frequent guest.
I watched the Valois princes come and go,
As did the Bourbon boys. I was almost
Ambassador without portfolio.

In those blue-bound chateaux, whole
centuries
Of Gallic politics, court intrigue, strife,
Liaisons passed under my enchanted gaze
Till I became a royalist for life
And would not, could not, not for all the
world,
Leave till the final lily banner furled.

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POLITICS

The Conquest of the United States and Puerto Rico

by Bill Kauffman

On the matter of statehood, Puerto Rico's outstanding novelist has written . . . actually, I have no idea what he has written, because I do not read Spanish, nor do I plan to learn. Should our flag be defaced by a 51st star for Puerto Rico—which is, admittedly, more deserving of stellification than the ersatz states, Alaska and Hawaii—most of us will be incapable of reading its writers or understanding its songs. Doesn't it seem the least bit odd that we will be unable to read the novelists and poets and polemicists of another of our *United* States? Even Mississippi's Faulkner is, theoretically, readable. (Hawaii is the exception—and the precedent—*pace* Don Ho.)

A century ago, William Graham Sumner warned us that overseas expansion carried within it the germ of destruction; that "all extension puts a new strain on the internal cohesion of the pre-existing mass, threatening a new cleavage within." The Anti-Imperialists—Brahmins and hardscrabble Populists, the James brothers and Tom Watson—fought courageously against the absorption of the rotten spoils of the Spanish-American War and lost, and the old republic was never quite the same; as one Anti-Imperialist wag had it, "Dewey took Manila with the loss of one man—and all our institutions." And so we are left to count the blessings we have derived from our colonial possessions: Pearl Harbor, once-pacific islands that target practice has bombed to rubble, and the co-ed-mauling Samoan football players of the Western Athletic Conference.

The acquisition of far-flung territories was, as Massachusetts Senator George Frisbie Hoar announced in 1899, "the greatest question that has ever been or ever will be put to [senators] in their lives, the question, not of a year or of a Congress, but . . . the great eternity of national life." Hoar predicted that imperialism "will make of our beloved country a cheap-jack country, raking after the cart for the leavings of European tyranny." The abhorred standing army would become a permanent feature of the American polity; the expense was "sure to make our national taxgatherer the most familiar visitant to every American home."

Hoar's famous dissent was an authentic profile in courage; think of him as the reverse image of a later Republican senator, Arthur Vandenberg, who defected to internationalism in the 1940's after being compromised by beautiful British spies acting as whores. (The homonyms here serve as antonyms. What today's Republican Party needs is a few good Hoars.)

Senator Hoar had been the most conventional of Gilded Age Republicans: He was of the Hamilton-Webster school, a believer in loose construction and the Great Barbecue. "I have believed religiously, and from my soul, for half a century, in the great doctrines and principles of the Republican party," he declared in his bitterly eloquent speech of January 9, 1899. He was horrified to watch his nation stray from "the ancient path of republican liberty which the fathers trod down into this modern swamp and cesspool of imperialism." For "the most vigorous health or life may be destroyed by a single drop of poison," and he foresaw that this would be the fate of the American people under an expansionist regime. Even at this late date, when the game is over and the box scores have been printed, who but an editor of the *New Republic* can fail to be moved by the hoary Brahmin's pathetic cry: "Is there to be no place on the face of the earth hereafter where a man can stand up by virtue of his manhood and say, 'I am a man?'"

When, at mid-century, the contiguity of these United States was violated by the admission of states 49 and 50, the good fight was fought by the usual noble but doomed group of geriatric liberal mugwumps, Southern Democrats, and Main Street Republicans—that is to say, Americans. North Carolina's Congressman Jones was typical of the last-named; he remarked in House debate in 1953,

> If Hawaii is admitted, the next step will be Alaska [*vice versa*, as the case turned out to be], and after these will come Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, Wake Island, and on down the line. Where is the line to be drawn? Where shall we stop? Shall we spread the American States over two or three continents? Have we learned nothing from the lessons of the old Roman Empire?

If Alaska and Hawaii were admitted, said Senator John Stennis (D-MS), "Puerto Rico will have her day or should have her day in court." That day has come.

Statehood for Puerto Rico, like its acquisition 100 years ago, is largely a Republican project borne of the same ghastly mixture of expansionism and Great White Father benevolence. The opposition, we are told, consists of a few grizzled graybeard Spaniards, some wild-eyed Puerto Rican communists preparing to toast statehood with Molotov cocktails (but Janet Reno will take care of them), and stateside racists who will admit, after a beer or two, that their real fear is putting "four million spics on welfare."

This is a serviceable lie that has crowded out the truth: that Puerto Rican *independentistas* are patriots, and that Americans who wish to grant the island her long-overdue freedom are acting in the best interests of *both* countries. "Independence," says Senator Ruben Berrios Martinez, long-time leader of the Puerto Rican Independence Party, "would end Puerto Rico's lifeless imitation of the colonizer, typical of colonies." The Uncle Tomases of statehood offer Disney and food stamps; the poets and patriots of the independence movement dream of the cultural flourishing of their enchanted isle. The dream has lasted decades.

The classic exposition of the debilitating effects of U.S. colonialism in Puerto Rico was provided by the brilliant young patriot and aristocratic *bon vivant* Luis Munoz Marin in the pages of the *American Mercury* in 1929. Inflammatory, mordant, spiked with enough punches at

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the Elks and Odd Fellows and Rotary to suggest that either Marin flavored his rum with Mencken or the Sage of Baltimore was an overactive editor, "The Sad Case of Porto Rico" explains that "The American flag found Porto Rico penniless and content. It now flies over a prosperous factory worked by slaves who have lost their land and may soon lose their guitars and their songs."

Republican trade policies transformed an island of small landholdings and independent coffee growers into a virtual sugarcane forest. Coffee, the crop of human-scale farmers, was not protected by the U.S.-imposed tariff; sugar was, and so, as Senator Martinez has written, an economy of

> small and medium-sized farms producing primarily for local consumption . . . became under the stimulus of U.S. tariff laws a large sugar plantation dominated by absentee landlords in the United States and tilled by a pauperized peasantry.

Munoz Marin, in his 1929 essay, achieves the kind of savagery that is only possible when the writer is witnessing the murder of something he loves. He deplores the Protestant do-goodism that is assaulting the island, though "I doubt that such implied notions as Christ's disapproval of cigarettes gets much serious attention from the local young men." He views the depressing effect of the uplifters, as

> charity becomes slightly organized, evangelical preachers thunder in the villages . . . three or four prominent citizens become Protestants and are considered funny, women are beginning to be feared as the rolling-pin follows the flag, virginity still abounds and often attains to old age, but is perceptibly on the wane.

To which Puerto Rican collaborators rejoined: GDP is rising! Exports are swelling! Disposable income is . . . being disposed of!

But something far greater than mere millions of dollars was at stake. To Munoz Marin, "saving a culture, even an inferior one, from becoming the monkey of another, even a superior one, is a good in itself." At all costs a Puerto-American hybrid must be avoided; yet he feared,

> Perhaps we are destined to be neither Porto Ricans nor Americans, but merely puppets of a mongrel state of mind, susceptible to American thinking and proud of Latin thought, subservient to American living and worshipful of the ancestral way of life. Perhaps we are to discuss Cervantes and eat pork and beans. . . . Perhaps we are going to a singularly fantastic and painless hell in our own sweet way. Perhaps all this is nothing but a foretaste of Pan-Americanism.

Munoz Marin was to fall in with a bad crowd—FDR, Rexford Guy Tugwell—and find, to the disgust of his erstwhile compatriots, that Scratch rewards his administrators handsomely. He would become the island's first elected governor and the chief architect of the peculiar commonwealth status it achieved in 1952.

As Munoz Marin delivered his people into the gilded cage of New Deal colonialism, leadership of the *independentistas* was assumed by the fiery Pedro Albizu Campos, whose uncompromising Nationalist Party took up the gun and created the official pretext for a half-century of vengeful and brutal repression of independence activities.

Albizu Campos believed in *La Raza* and the Catholic Church; his movement opposed canned goods, U.S.-sponsored birth control programs, and any hint of collaboration with the colonial power. Nationalists despised the New Deal and refused to accept government employment. Albizu Campos called young Puerto Ricans who disdained independence "sissies." Modern Latin American historians of the left are not quite comfortable with Campos and the Nationalists. Yes, they battled the colossus across the sea, but they also were "particularly concerned with the idea of promoting the Puerto Rican bourgeoisie and turning workers into small landholders." Most were devout Catholics.

The Nationalists marched, fought, illegally flew the Puerto Rican flag, and used such proscribed terms as "*nacion*" and "*patria*." As Senator Martinez writes, from the 1930's through the 1950's "*independentistas* were arrested and imprisoned for almost any reason, including reciting patriotic poetry, making speeches, and unfurling the Puerto Rican flag." Pedro Albizu Campos was to spend most of these years in prison for inciting violence; he stubbornly refused to beg for a pardon or renounce revolution.

World War II and its Cold War aftermath turned Puerto Rico into an alleged strategic asset; the Roosevelt-Truman administrations lavished federal monies on the island while jailing and silencing patriots. Commonwealth—a travesty of self-government, plausible only to those who believe that junior-high-school student councils actually run the schools—was hatched. Jose A. Cabranes, a high-ranking official in Munoz Marin's Popular Democratic Party, called commonwealth

> an authentic expression of the post-war American liberal worldview: a poor and racially mixed Third World community undergoing modernization as a result of the inventive application of American capital and American liberal ideology.

Munoz Marin was cursed by despairing Nationalists for forsaking independence in favor of commonwealth. Hotheads and homicides among them responded with mad assassination attempts against President Truman, Munoz Marin, and members of the U.S. House of Representatives. And that was all she wrote: The resultant crackdown, on both the gun-toting Nationalists and the nonviolent middle-class Puerto Rican Independence Party, destroyed political manifestations of Puerto Rican patriotism for a generation or more.

If ever one needs evidence of the devitalizing, emasculatory effects of colonialism, look no further than the paltry vote totals tallied by today's *independentistas*. In 1952, barely one-eighth of Puerto Rican voters supported pro-statehood parties, while almost one-fifth favored the independence-minded parties. Today, almost half support statehood, and barely five percent cast their votes for a free Puerto Rico.

Writing in the *Nation*, Antonio M. Stevens-Arroyo asserts that "the abundance of consumer goods that has resulted from the U.S. presence has limited the appeal of the *independentistas*." The Puerto Rican Independence Party is asking people bred in political serfdom to choose liberty and dignity over a welfare check and a Madonna CD. It may be a

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lot to ask.

As during the Cold War, U.S. policymakers assure us that *independentistas* are "left of red," in Eric Burdon's felicitous phrase. While it shouldn't much interest Americans what kind of economic system other peoples may choose, the messy fact is that statehood is advertised by its proponents as a pass on the gravy train, a free tray at the welfare-state buffet, while independence leader Senator Martinez is given to such commie observations as "the founding fathers did not intend statehood as a ticket for a poor nation to a cornucopia of federal welfare benefits" and "the basic economic problem of Puerto Rico is . . . dependence on U.S. subsidies."

Statehood advocates—the "good Puerto Ricans," in the view of the Democrat-Republican Party—base their case almost solely on welfarist grounds; it is the *independentistas* who reject the statehood utopia of one big happy welfare-fattened bilingual Puerto Rican state. While the Republican National Hispanic Assembly gushes that statehood would turn welfare into a "right rather than charity," the "leftist" Stevens-Arroyo argues that "the statehood myth carries the seduction of dependency. Like a hospital patient on a life-support system, Puerto Rico's economy has become dependent on subsidies."

Independentistas assert that cultural regeneration must precede economic prosperity. This is why the typical university-bound activist who uses words like "transgressive" is unsympathetic to Martinez's *Partido Independentista Puertorriqueno* (PIP); the party tends to "attribute many social ills to the excessive dependency on government handouts." Party leaders also believe that independence will allow Puerto Ricans "to regain their dignity and pride" and instill "a new work ethic."

An indigenous creation, the PIP is not easily translated into terms intelligible to Richard Gephardt and Trent Lott. It has attacked government waste and politicians who travel abroad and called for an emphasis on "manly sports." Historian Raymond Carr, in a study for the Twentieth Century Fund, noted that, to the PIP, "a national theater is . . . as important as a national economy." Television is loathed for its "violence, cultural assimilation, individualism and the excess of consumerism."

The PIP is also absolutist—extremist!—when it comes to Puerto Rico maintaining her language. The island's English-speaking masters have discouraged the use of Spanish off and on over the last hundred years, and Puerto Rico is unlikely to achieve statehood without some requirement, however ineffectual, that her people learn a Spanglish *patois*. (More than 60 percent now speak no English at all.)

Well-meaning nativists play into the hands of the Cold War liberals (who, a decade after the Soviet Union's collapse, still define American politics) by wielding such sticks of petty tyranny as "English only" dictates. Statehooders who press bilingualism on Puerto Rico seek to remove her heart and accept the corpse into our union. (Imperialists care about "the cage, not the birds," according to Albizu Campos.)

Independentistas are right: Puerto Ricans who advocate statehood are not merely misguided; like the Americans who sat on metric-conversion boards or worked for the CIA, they are collaborators in the destruction of their nation. They gutlessly eschew the seemingly unobjectionable phrase "Puerto Rican people" and instead describe themselves as "U.S. citizens resident in Puerto Rico." What self-respecting American wants to share citizenship with bloodless people who deny the primacy of their homeland? Someone like Senator Martinez is easier to understand, with his pronouncement that

> Puerto Rico's heart is not American. It is Puerto Rican. The national sentiment of Puerto Ricans is entirely devoted to our patria, as we call our homeland in Spanish. We are Puerto Ricans in the same way that Mexicans are Mexicans and Japanese are Japanese. For us, "we the people" means we Puerto Ricans.

So where do we go from here? Shall Puerto Rico join Hawaii and Alaska? (Fittingly, Alaska Congressman Don Young is the leading statehood advocate in the House, as one bastard state helps beget another.) Guam, with its active commonwealth movement and murmurs of statehood, will be next.

"There seems to be a feeling in the United States against permitting others to be responsible for their own welfare," wrote Munoz Marin 70 years ago. That feeling seldom extends beyond Wall Street and the District of Columbia—do any of *your* neighbors give a damn about Puerto Rico one way or the other?—but it has earned us the hatred of people against whom Main Street Americans harbor no ill will.

That statehood talk is in the air suggests just how thoroughly Puerto Rico has been routed. The loss of one's culture, the pretty poison of statehood, is "insidious," wrote Munoz Marin.

> It works while you sleep. It changes the expression of your eyes, the form of your paunch, the tone of your voice, your hopes of Heaven, what your neighbors and your women expect of you—all without giving you a chance to fight back, without even presenting to you the dilemma of fighting back or not.

Puerto Rico, he predicted, "will never be incorporated into the Union as a State save through the operation of cultural forces: that is, not unless, and until, our manner of life and thought has been respectably Americanized" (or until Americans have been disrespectfully Puerto Ricanized). A fantastic and painless hell, Munoz Marin called it, with a grinning newt standing at the gate. The price of admission is the loss of Puerto Rico's soul. What kind of monster regards this as a bargain?

Under Puerto Rican statehood, the Democrats will keep Maria's welfare checks coming, and the Republicans will force her children to speak English and scorn their mother's tongue, as well as the mother tongue. Maria's great-grandchildren may become fanatical nationalists, but by then it will be too late. They'll need Berlitz tapes and Sony recorders to relearn the language.

Young Munoz Marin wanted "Porto Rico to be Porto Rico, not a lame replica of Ohio or Arizona." It is more likely, given the official celebration of all things non-American, that Ohio will become a lame replica of Puerto Rico, as the children of Akron and Ponce snooze through the same federally approved history texts and watch the same Fox nighttime soaps and learn everything about Rosie O'Donnell and nothing about Sherwood Anderson or Pedro Albizu Campos.

The United States of America, the 48 contiguous states on the North American continent, cannot absorb Puerto Rico (or Hawaii or Alaska, for that matter) with-

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out dishonoring our ancestors and adulterating the cultures of both countries. It is time—it is way past time—for patriots who love our country and who understand that home is not elastic to take their stand on the American soil of the Old 48.

Vivan los independentistas! For Puerto Rico's sake, yes—but for ours, too.

Bill Kauffman is the author of four books, including With Good Intentions? Reflections on the Myth of Progress in America *(Praeger).*

Live Right, Think Left

by George Watson

"Anglo-Saxon hypocrisy" is a famous phrase, and in January 1996, Harriet Harman, Labour spokesman for health in the British House of Commons, became an object of scorn on both sides of the House by sending her 11-year-old son to a school outside the public sector, chosen by entrance examination. She was later, after 1997, a minister in the Blair government.

She was only following her leader, it must be said. In fact it *was* said, repeatedly. Prime Minister Tony Blair sends his son to another such school, hardly less selective, and both events caused public outrage, since Labour is against selection. Left-wing hypocrisy is suddenly a fashionable topic again.

To live right and think left has its advantages, after all—you get the material benefits of the one with the moral satisfactions of the other—and it has been about for much of the century. In fact, most languages have witty descriptions for it, all coined before the war. The English speak of "champagne socialists," the French have *gauche de luxe* and the Germans *Salonbolshewiker*. So the hunt for hypocrisy is an old one, and there are those who are happy to be back at the game. The prime minister of the day, John Major, took all his chances at parliamentary question-time. "I'm just being tough on hypocrisy and tough on the causes of hypocrisy," he told Tony Blair blandly in 1996, to Conservative cheers and jeers, echoing a phrase the Labour leader had once thought he had made his own. Meanwhile, after a stormy meeting with her own party, Ms. Harman, who is married to a prominent union official, kept her job—just. But with a year to go before a general election, the matter was not soon forgiven or forgotten.

There are several explanations to be offered for her behavior that are more or less convincing. There are also her own explanations, which are not. She was only, she told an interviewer, making a choice that thousands of parents have to make for their children; but Labour is publicly committed to abolishing the right of parents to choose. The present school system in Britain, she claims, which is divided between public and private, is not of Labour's making; but in fact it is, since it derives from the Butler Education Act of 1944, which Labour (in coalition) supported. In any case, there is nothing unsocialist about selection. It was practiced widely in Eastern Europe in the days of the Soviet Empire, and it was endorsed by Labour down to the 1960's. Communism, in its day, had nothing to do with equality, and the privileges of its ruling class were notorious.

There are contradictions when a dedicated egalitarian seeks to abolish educational selection, in Britain or elsewhere. To start at the top: If Eton College and other fee-paying schools were abolished, education would probably become even more unequal, since Britain enjoys freedom of movement with its neighbors as a member of the European Union. If fee-paying were abolished, the rich could still send their children abroad to private schools that would probably cost even more, since they would involve travel costs as well as boarding and expert teaching. So a universal public sector at home might well prove not less elitist but more. As for the middle tier, or grammar schools, if you abolish them and let Eton survive, as Labour has long been pledged to do, you destroy the ladder by which the poor have traditionally climbed into the professional classes—in which case, in a competitive world, Etonians would enjoy even better chances of promotion than now. These are arguments that Labour leaders would prefer not to hear, and they hope no one will have the wit or audacity to utter them. They are likely, in that hope, to be disappointed.

The world is plainly right to be tough on hypocrisy and its causes, whether left or right. And it will be, in an age where the media are merciless to those in office and no less merciless to those who seek it. Power can expect no pity. But I suspect there is another issue here, and one that is so far unheard. I mean the case of the justified sinner—one who believes, and honestly believes, that he has fulfilled his moral duty to God, or to some abstraction like social justice, when he has declared his allegiance. It is enough, he thinks, to speak up. A declaration of virtue can then be used to justify a life of sin. But my term is borrowed from a novel now seldom read, though it deserves to be, and I should explain.

The Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner is a horror story by a Scottish poet named James Hogg. It appeared anonymously in 1824, and it tells the grim tale of Robert Wringhim, who is legally the son of a land-owning laird but has been strictly and piously brought up by a Calvinist minister who is probably his real father. From boyhood on, Wringhim justified a life of deceit and violent crime by a certainty that he is one of the elect of God. His sins are divinely justified, and he cannot be damned. "Hath He not made one vessel to honor and another to dishonor, as in the case with myself and thee?" Wringhim tells a wretched servant who has convicted him of lying. That is only a beginning. Wringhim grows up to kill his elder brother, and when his father dies of a broken heart, he inherits the estate and continues his profitable career of murder.

The fable, in a melodramatic way, is apposite to our times, and there may even be those who find Hogg's book too close for comfort. Wringhim was son and heir to a laird, for one thing, and it is notable that parties claiming a socialist tradition are seldom led by the low-bred. Tony Blair, who went to a private school and then to Oxford, is today the most socially superior leader of any British political party. Conservatives, by contrast, gave up electing gentlemen to lead them as long ago as 1965, when Edward Heath replaced Sir Alec Douglas-Home; and John Major, who was brought up in rented rooms in south London and went to no university, has the humblest social origins of any British prime minister since the war. Harriet Harman, true to form, is the daughter of an eminent physician, was privately educated, and is a niece to the Countess of Longford. It may seem entirely natural for such people to give their own children a privileged education. That is all they know. It may even have seemed natural to them

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to suppose they could get away with it, and Ms. Harman, in her interviews, sounded surprised as well as bitter at the bother she caused. Was not one vessel made to honor, she may well have felt, and another to dishonor? I do not know if she has read Hogg's novel. But her frank reply that it is all right to violate principle if others do it too strikes a sympathetic chord.

The justified sinner in the post-Calvinist style, thinking left and living right, is not necessarily a hypocrite. He may genuinely believe that a declaration of social justice is enough. He may genuinely believe that he is not bound by the rules he insists should be enforced on others. Do as I say, not as I do. The purity of his convictions justifies him in seeking riches, power, honor, and privileges for himself and his own. If anyone challenges him, he will reply with more declarations about social justice.

That, after all, has been the spirit of the century. Psychoanalysis has long encouraged the belief that to be open about one's desires is to render them harmless, or at least less harmful. As a view it may be faintly ridiculous, but it is too open to be called hypocritical. It is rather common to think that frankness justifies a violation of principle; it is entirely possible to be sincere about social justice and to believe, at the same time, that it has nothing to do with oneself.

The type, which is little more than a century old, has only a short history, since the ideal of social equality has had only a short life. In earlier centuries, when charity to the poor was a recognized duty, its object was not to abolish poverty but to mitigate it; and even when the French revolutionaries of 1789 spoke of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, the middle term meant no more than equality before the law. Liberals were openly the enemies of equality of condition. Gladstone, who became the first Liberal prime minister of Britain in 1868, called himself an Inequalitarian, and believed (perhaps rightly) that he had invented the word. It meant that if equality of condition were by some miracle to be achieved, he, as an exponent of free trade and the free market, would be in favor of abolishing it. To establish equality, after all, or even to try to establish it, is to destroy liberty. You cannot have equality of condition and liberty, too, and the point was once widely understood and openly proclaimed.

The cult of social equality, on the other hand, is new, though like other new cults, it has its precursors. In a maiden speech in the House of Lords in February 1812, the sixth Lord Byron, nowadays better remembered as a poet than as a legislator, passionately defended the Nottingham workers whose riots against new machinery had recently been suppressed; but several years later, in exile in Italy, he showed no concern about the welfare of his own workers when his lawyers sold his mines to provide a settlement to the wife he had deserted and to pay debts arising from his profligate style of life. Byron's eminent example casts a long shadow forward across our own century. Picasso supported the French Communist Party during the occupation of Paris, but when I was there soon after the liberation, it was said that if you wanted to know where to eat well, it was enough to ask where Picasso had dined last night. Jean-Paul Sartre, who called the Soviet Union the better side, sat on a resistance committee during the Occupation, but that is all he did. Unlike Samuel Beckett, who was actively anti-Nazi, Sartre and his friend Simone de Beauvoir took no action against the Nazis but shared a table at the Café de Flore in the Boulevard St. Germain, where they sat for hours talking and writing. "We were intellectuals, you see," Simone de Beauvoir told an interviewer years later, shocked that anyone should suppose they should have performed active service. To hold views that were politically correct was enough, in her view, and it justified doing nothing.

The tradition has its comic aspects. Bertrand Russell, the third Earl, who was the hero of the New Left in its heady days in the 1960's, never to the end of his life learned how to make a cup of tea, in spite of elaborate written instructions left by his housekeeper on her afternoons off. No doubt a hatred of nuclear arms and an incapacity to boil a kettle are not incompatible. Tom Driberg, for years a leading figure on the Labour Left in the House of Commons and eventually party chairman, was once heard raising a patrician voice to a waiter: "What do you mean, you can't get oysters?" That was on his way home from a party conference, and the experience must have taught him that political campaigning can mean having to rough it. Aneurin Bevan, who led the Labour Left in the 1950's, was famous in his last years for living on a diet of caviar and champagne, and boasted the richest complexion to be seen in British public life, along with one of its amplest waistlines. The rulers of Marxist states, meanwhile, like Tito of Yugoslavia, Ceausescu of Rumania, and Mengistu of Ethiopia, built lavish palaces for their own use, some of which have now been thriftily turned into luxury hotels. Nenni, leader of the Italian Socialist Party in its Marxist days, once posed for a group of cameramen after a sumptuous picnic, held out a boiled egg, and announced, "Give it to the poor"; and President Castro of Cuba is rumored to be one of the richest men in the world. It is one of the consolations of middle-aged reformers that the inequalities they revile will in all likelihood outlive them. But they should not suppose that their conduct will pass unnoticed, even while they live.

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GUNS

Guns and the Press

by William R. Tonso

Brrrrrrrrrrrt! Brrrrrrrrrrrt! As the shooter sprayed his target, his gun ejected a steady stream of shiny spent brass cartridges. Millions of Americans watched this impressive demonstration on their TV screens, while the NBC reporter informed them that the legislation soon to be voted on by the House or Senate would ban "assault weapons." In a slightly different version of the scenario, a prominent gun-control activist would state that the guns covered by the ban, presumably guns like the one being demonstrated, were of no value to hunters or sportsmen. So what?

So this: The gun being demonstrated was a *full*-automatic, a machine gun, that fires as long as the trigger is held back. The guns covered by the legislation were *semi*-automatics, which—however much they may *look* like machine guns—fire only one shot per trigger pull. Legal machine gun possession by Amer-

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icans has, rightly or wrongly, been strictly regulated by the federal government since 1934, and many states ban civilians from owning such guns. Semi-automatics have been used by Americans for sport and other legitimate purposes since the turn of the century (before the military started using them), and after World War II, the federal government sold surplus semi-automatic rifles, carbines, and pistols to the public at bargain prices.

In the five years that followed the 1989 Stockton, California, schoolyard shooting which involved the use of a semi-automatic version of the full-automatic AK-47, every time I viewed NBC coverage of "assault weapon" legislation, the gun shown firing was a full-automatic. For five years, NBC led its viewers to believe that the machine guns they were showing were the guns to be covered by the proposed ban on "semi-automatic assault weapons" (which they weren't), that opponents of the ban want to hunt with machine guns (which they don't), and that sport is the only legitimate use Americans have for guns (which it isn't).

I've seen the same misleading juxtaposition of machine-gun demonstration and discussion of semi-automatics on CNN. *Newsweek*'s 1985 cover story, "Machine Gun USA," presented readers with illustrations of several semi-automatic versions of full-automatic guns accompanied by captions citing the much higher firing rates of the latter. This *Newsweek* article and a March 16, 1989, CBS special on "assault weapons" also made light of the difference between semi-automatics and full-automatics on the questionable and irrelevant grounds that the latter can be quickly converted to the former. Yet parts that make some semi-automatics easily convertible to machine guns are themselves classified and regulated as machine guns, while a semi-automatic AK-47 conversion to full-automatic involves a time-consuming and complicated process. Besides, ease of conversion as a criteria for regulation would affect all rifles and shotguns, because they can all be quickly and easily sawed off under legal length.

Nor is "sporting use" the only justification for gun ownership. There is also the Second Amendment. According to the very clear paper trail left by the Founders (detailed in numerous law review articles), these concerns have nothing to do with sport or, for that matter, with the National Guard. The people who put this country together made it very clear that they wanted an armed citizenry as a check against tyranny. Consider the following comment on the Second Amendment by James Madison's friend Tench Coxe:

> As civil rulers, not having their duty to the people before them, may attempt to tyrannize, and as the military forces which must be occasionally raised to defend our country, might pervert their power to the injury of their fellow citizens, the people are confirmed by the next article in their right to keep and bear their *private* arms [emphasis added].

These same sentiments have been expressed by prominent Americans ranging from Thomas Jefferson to Mr. Liberal himself, Hubert H. Humphrey, but today, in mainstream journalistic circles, such views are labeled extremist.

Given the amount of misinformation the public has received, should we credit polls that show Americans support the now-passed ban on "assault weapons" by over 70 percent? Do those who support the ban want to ban machine guns, which have been regulated by the federal government since 1934 and have long been banned in some states, or do they really want to ban guns that might look like machine guns but work like the ordinary semi-automatics many of them own? Even if we take these polls at face value, since when does public opinion override constitutionally guaranteed rights?

I started following mainstream press coverage of the gun-control movement way back in the late 1950's when it resurfaced after a 20-year hiatus. Over the past four decades, I have read or viewed thousands of commentaries on the gun issue—newspaper and magazine stories, editorials, columns, political cartoons, and comic strips; TV news reports, documentaries, situation comedies, dramas, and talk shows. My gun-control clipping collection from local newspapers alone is a foot or so high, and I only started systematically collecting in 1981. I am extremely familiar with the media through which most Americans get what they assume to be the facts about guns and gun control.

But unlike most Americans, I'm in a position not only to judge the accuracy of the reported "facts," but to know what isn't reported about guns and the controversy over their control. I have spent the six-plus decades of my life around guns and people who know them and use them legitimately, and I've read about guns since I was a child. Since the late 1960's, when I started thinking about doing my sociology doctoral dissertation on the social, cultural, and historical roots of the interest in firearms in the free industrial world, I've read hundreds of scholarly articles and books relevant to the gun issue, including historical investigations of the meaning of the Second Amendment, and criminological examinations of the relationship between gun-ownership rates and violent-crime rates. So I know both guns and the scholarly literature relevant to them (a literature to which I have contributed), and I know how to conduct and evaluate social science research. Yet the mainstream media coverage of the gun issue seldom reflects anything that I know about guns from firsthand experience or scholarship.

With a few notable exceptions (among them Henry Allen of the *Washington Post*, Ted Gest of *U.S. News & World Report*, and Hugh Downs of ABC), mainstream journalists are not only ignorant about guns and the legitimate uses to which they are put, but make no effort to overcome their ignorance. They accept uncritically the premises of gun prohibitionists. Among other achievements, the press has made mythical "Saturday night specials," "cop killer bullets," "plastic pistols," and "semi-automatic assault weapons" household terms—all properly demonized, of course.

"Saturday night specials," you may recall, are the easily-concealed, cheap (talk about definitional precision), small-caliber handguns allegedly of absolutely no use to anyone but criminals. (The label seems to have been derived from the racist phrase "nigger town Saturday night," as opponents of bans on them have pointed out for over 20 years. Perhaps that's why liberal Democratic Senator Barbara Boxer of California now calls these weapons "junk guns.") Whatever these guns are called, reporters are not inclined to ask penetrating questions about them. What reason do we have to believe that criminals prefer shoddy, low-powered handguns, and if they do, why should we encourage them to change to good quality, high-powered handguns? And how can any handgun be so useful to criminals but of no use at

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all to honest folks trying to protect themselves? If small, inexpensive guns can be as easily used to defend against crime as they can be used to commit crime, how can you justify bans on the only guns the poor can afford—the poor who enjoy less police protection than the rest of us do?

What about those "cop killer bullets" that NBC first warned the public about back in 1982? You know, those Teflon-coated slugs that can zip right through body armor. Have you ever seen a casualty list of cops laid low by bullets of this sort? Two cops, neither of whom were wearing body armor, were allegedly killed with armor-piercing bullets in 1976, and two years earlier another cop was crippled by a bullet that did penetrate his armor. That's all I can find for the period before these bullets were banned in 1984. While the Clinton administration is pushing for a wider ban on bullets that can pierce armor, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms has recently released a report indicating that between 1985 and 1994, no bullet fired from a handgun penetrated body armor to kill a police officer.

Did NBC save civilization as we know it by warning us about these things so that they could be banned before they started further thinning the thin blue line? Hardly! Teflon-coated slugs had been around since 1966 or so, they were developed for the police, and they were not sold to the public. It's also worth noting that practically any slug fired from a center-fire rifle of the kind commonly used by hunters will defeat police body armor. The right combination of shape, speed, and hardness of the projectile is what does the job.

Or take those terrorist-choice "plastic pistols" which Jack Anderson brought to the public's attention back in 1986. They actually contain about a pound of steel and have become the favorites of many cops across the United States. How were the terrorist demons exorcised from these guns, and why hasn't the press informed the public accordingly?

In his 1988 report on "assault weapons," gun-prohibitionist Josh Sugarmann wrote:

> The weapons' menacing looks, coupled with the public's confusion over fully automatic machine guns versus semi-automatic assault weapons—anything that looks like a machine gun is assumed to be a machine gun—can only increase the chance of public support for restrictions on these weapons. In addition, few people can envision a practical use for these guns.

Note that Sugarmann accurately predicted public support for restrictions on "semi-automatic assault weapons" (an oxymoron; if it's semi-automatic it's not an "assault" anything) not because the public was informed, but because it wasn't informed or likely to become so.

Back in May 1994, I finally became aggravated enough with NBC's juxtapositions of machine-gun demonstrations and discussions of semi-automatics to call in a complaint. The woman I spoke to confidently told me that they were no longer doing the juxtapositions. Her confidence faded when I told her that I had just seen one. On August 15, 1994, after viewing another juxtaposition, I called in another complaint. The gentleman I spoke to said nothing in reply until I opined that it apparently did no good to call in complaints. He responded that anyone could make a mistake. When I replied that NBC had been making that same mistake for five years, he hung up. I called back immediately to get his name, and he told me that he didn't have to take that kind of abuse and hung up again.

The next day, I called NBC again and ended up talking to David McCormick, the man in charge of broadcast standards. McCormick was quite pleasant and explained to me that efforts had been made to put a halt to the juxtapositions, but that NBC's people, affiliates included, were so numerous and far-flung that monitoring them was difficult.

On August 25, 1994, I related my complaints about the juxtapositions and my conversations with NBC staffers to Andrew Lack, president of NBC's News Division, via letter, with copies to the chairman of the Federal Communications Commission and the general manager of NBC's local affiliate. I have never received an acknowledgment of that letter. NBC did stop showing its misleading juxtapositions shortly before the crime bill with its ban on "semi-automatic assault weapons" was passed. However, NBC has yet to inform its viewers that for five years it led them to believe that the guns to be banned were already regulated machine guns rather than common, if exotic-looking, semi-automatics.

No wonder a recent Pew Research Center survey found that 67 percent of the public believes that "[i]n dealing with political & social issues news organizations . . . [t]end to favor one side."

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LANGUAGE

The Reality of Written Words

by John Lukacs

In the beginning was the Word. (Not the picture. Or the number.) We are now at the cusp of a movement into a new age when, for large masses of people, verbal images and verbal imagination seem gradually to be replaced by pictorial images and pictorial imagination. I shall attempt to describe one, perhaps seldom observed, aspect of verbal imagination. ("Aspect" is a word I do not like, but, in this case, it may be proper.)

Not only the sound but the visual impression of a word has a powerful, and durable, impact on our minds, indeed on our imagination. That impression, of course, is the consequence of literacy. And we must consider literacy not only a chapter in the long evolving history of human communications but also an increment of human consciousness. Still, I must begin with the sounds of words. That there is a difference between the spoken and the written word, and that in the historical evolution of mankind the first preceded the second, is obvious. (Consider only the origins of the word *language*, related in almost every language to the *tongue*. The *manufacture*—that is, the writing—of words came later.) Many of our earliest and basic words are onomatopoeic, sound-connected. This condition is more than an ancient survival or an aesthetic element. It gives an added meaning to words, a substantial dimension that numbers or scientific categories cannot offer.

There are still "progressives" who think that it is within the province of mankind to produce a universal and scientific world in which human commu-

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nications will no longer be hindered by national and linguistic differences, which will give way to a universal and scientific language, with its formulas instantly recognized, accepted, and used by everyone. H_2O is, of course, more scientific and more categorical than "water"; moreover, it indicates a scientifically fixed reality, with its potentiality of universality. Yet H_2O has two shortcomings that are inescapable. One is that it refers to a condition which is abstract and which in reality does not exist, to a substance that consists of absolutely nothing but hydrogen and oxygen. Yet that is a desideratum (to be sure, a desideratum with all kinds of practical results) because, no matter how assiduous the process of its distillation, a 100 percent (and not a 99.9999 percent) H_2O does not and cannot exist. And more important is the condition that "water," while less precise, is more telling than H_2O, because "water" (like "*eau*," "*acqua*," "*agua*," "*Wasser*," "*viz*") *sounds* like water, while H_2O does not.

More telling, because of its additional meaning. For words are not the symbols of *things*: They are symbols of *meanings*. And the meaning of meaning is that it carries our minds not only deeper, but further. Meaning is not mechanical or determined; it is spiritual and teleological. It is no longer sufficient for us to recall that the Greek word "*logos*" means both "word" and "reason." We may have to understand that our recognition of the word as a symbol of meaning amounts to an enrichment of our reasoning.

Allow me to carry this argument a little further. Yes, we think in words—but not only because of their sounds. Yes, words may carry a sense of music, which is, of course, a (if not *the*) fundamental element of poetry. But there is even more to them. When I hear (or read) "multitudinous seas incarnadine," the grandeur of the music of those words carries with it a (perhaps smaller but still existent) sense of sight: Those oceanic words, with their wonderfully majestic swells, rise up not only in my ears but before the very eyes of my mind. Conversely, when two or three bars of music, a snatch of a musical "phrase," keeps humming in my ears, I do *not* necessarily see their visual notation; I do not associate them with the score with its keys and staves. But when I hear a sequence of words, their written or printed shape intrudes in my mind somehow.

I have often thought that there is a profound—and sometimes mysterious—relationship not only between words and their sounds but between words and their shapes. "Egg" is not the most beautiful but perhaps the most perfect of English words, because it not only sounds like an egg but also looks like one. "Awkward," too, sounds as well as looks awkward. This is so for certain names, too: Consider a name like Balzac. Thinking of the meaning of words and their visual shapes, we must consider that sight is the most intellectual of all of our senses; that we experience the world—and its words—not only from the outside in but from the inside out; that there is more to seeing than what meets the eye, because seeing is not only *inseparable from* but *simultaneous with* (that is, occurring together with) our imagination: not merely a reaction to stimuli but a creative act.

All of this is—or ought to be—obvious. It also relates to the condition that all human communications are necessarily imprecise and imperfect—wherein resides much of their meaning, and also their charm. The dictionary tells us that the equivalent of the English "honest" is the French "*honnête*." But they are not equivalent. Despite their common Latin source ("*honor, honoris*"), through history their meanings have become, however slightly, different: "*Honnête homme*" is not the same as "an honest man," and it is the very knowledge of such differences that enriches the charm of our knowing another language, of understanding another people. But let me again carry this a little further. We may listen to a foreign language that we do not understand, and yet it may *sound* beautiful. *Looking* at an unknown language, it is not likely that we will find it beautiful. "Honest" and "*honnête*" may even sound alike, but not only are their meanings slightly different, they look different, too. ("Honest" does not only sound "honest," it looks honest.) Another, vulgar example: Were a German, reading an English text, to pronounce "sheet" as "sh--" we would find that funny; but then the German word "*Scheiss*" is also thicker than "sh--," not only in sound but also in sight.

I was reading an English novel in which one of the main women is "Hyacinth," an accomplished and elegant lady. Her name does not particularly appeal to me, perhaps because it is outdated—anyhow, Hyacinth may look better than it sounds (long-legged, early-summer, a pale beauty even when *in floribus*). But what suddenly occurred to me—and I do not know why—is what would happen if Hyacinth were not only translated or pronounced but transliterated into my native Hungarian language. If a Hungarian who does not know English were to ask: What does this name mean? I would say the Hungarian word for the flower: "*Jácint*." If he were to ask: How does this name sound? I would say "Hyacinth," with an English pronunciation, not with an enforced Hungarian stress: This *may* strike my Hungarian conversant as a little odd, but I could assure him that it is not odd in English. But if he then were to write that pronunciation down, in Hungarian, there would be plenty of trouble. For "*háj-szint*," in Hungarian, is a very ugly word, or compound of two words, both in their meaning and in their shape: "*háj*" meaning suet or lard, repulsive fat, and "*szint*" either "level" or the accusative of "color." In sum: lard-colored, or something like that.

Within the constraints of our alphabet, of course. The Cyrillic alphabet transliterates. While "Churchill" has a wonderful shape in English, it looks terrible when rendered in Russian, and even worse when re-transliterated: "Tcher-Tchil," as if it were the name of a Caucasian bandit. Terrible to me, of course. Were Russian my native language, would it look terrible to me? Probably not. I think that a Russian who does not know English would *see* (and perhaps even hear) that word differently from a Russian who knows English: To the latter, "Churchill" would still be

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Churchill. But back to "Hyacinth"—what would happen if it were written in Hungarian as "Hájszint"? Written, more than spoken, with the consequence that among its readers the idea would occur that the English language, that English names, that English women are ugly.

If words were only symbols of things (this is what the computer suggests they are) their meaning would have the equivalence of facts. "Her name is Hyacinth. That is a fact." But I, as an historian, have often shocked—without really wishing to do so—some of my students (and, alas, some of my colleagues) when I said that history does not consist of facts but of words about facts, because no "fact" has any meaning by itself. The meaning of any and every "fact" depends on our immediate association of it with other facts; moreover, its meaning also, and inevitably, depends on our statement (or call it "phrasing") of it—whence there are statements in which the "fact" may be precise but its meaning may be untrue. And so the finding of the *mot juste* is the inevitable task not only of the poet or the novelist but of the historian, too, since his selection of every word is not only a scientific or aesthetic but also a moral choice.

Unlike his great adversary Churchill, who wrote better than he spoke, Hitler was not a master of the written word. He knew that; he said once that his *Mein Kampf* must not be read but spoken. He was right in that: There are long portions of *Mein Kampf* that are unreadable, rather than unspeakable. (But then "unspeakable" has a double meaning, too: Something that ought not be said.) On the other hand, 20th-century literature has plenty of examples of prose that are readable rather than speakable—an intellectual tendency that has, lamentably, seeped into the practices of modern or post-modern poetry, too: for poetry that is not speakable cannot be poetry at all.

Does this mean that the world is getting more and more prosaic, perhaps due to its evolving mechanization? No. If our images and our imagination are becoming more visual and less verbal, this does not mean that they are becoming less intellectual: to the contrary, since, as I wrote before, sight is the most intellectual of our senses. Of course, the increase of intellectuality is not necessarily a good thing. The sins of the spirit are worse than the sins of the flesh; a voyeur is no less of a sinner or a pervert than the men and women whose acts he watches (or wishes to watch). There is, undoubtedly, an increasing intrusion of mind into matter—but this does not mean that words are becoming less meaningful in our lives. One of the earliest symptoms, beginning more than 100 years ago, of the popular transition from verbal to pictorial imagination was the printing of comics in the newspapers, something ready-made for *slow* readers; but most comic strips are meaningless without words in their balloons. Then came the cartoons of the *New Yorker* type, where the artwork is (or, rather, was) superior to the comics but is also dependent on the words of its captions, much more terse and condensed than those of the comics, and therefore more intellectual and suggestive. And now we have the Internet through which, on occasion, men and women fall in love by reading each others' disembodied messages in words. In sum: The Age of the Book may be coming to its end, but the Word was not only there in the beginning; it will be there until the end.

What this means is that we may become more sensitive to the quality of words, including their visual forms, their shapes. This has nothing to do with the future of typography (though it does have something to do with the future of spelling). It goes deeper. It occurs within the conscious, not the subconscious, functioning of our minds—at a time when we must begin thinking about thinking itself. And thinking is inseparable from the words we know, including their various qualities. *Quantities* are definable and mathematically fixable. *Qualities* are not. Their sources lie deep in our minds. They are existential realities. Computers can do fabulous calculations of quantities—but not of qualities, in the sense in which Plato had recognized their existence.

> The word *quality* is used by most educated people every day of their lives, yet in order that we should have this simple word Plato had to make the tremendous effort (it is one of the most exhausting which man is called on to exert) of turning a vague feeling into a clear thought. He invented the new word "*poiotës*," "what-ness," as we might say, or "of-what-kind-ness," and Cicero translated it by the Latin "*qualitas*," from "*qualis*."

Thus wrote Owen Barfield in his *History in English Words*, which I consider one of the most important works of this century. And in this inadequate attempt of an essay, I have tried to take a step further, to suggest the association of words not only with their histories and with their sounds but with their shapes, with their meaning perceived not only with our ears but also with our eyes. But perhaps Shakespeare had already known this when he wrote about imagination:

> And as imagination bodies forth
> The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
> Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing
> A local habitation and a name.

John Lukacs is the author, most recently, of A Thread of Years *(Yale University Press).*

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Reflections on a Texan's Visit to Bosnia

by David Hartman

Since returning from a visit to Bosnia-Herzegovina arranged by The Rockford Institute to consult with the Republic of Srpska (one of Bosnia's component states) on privatization of its socialist industries, I have given considerable thought as to what Americans (especially Texans) might learn from the recent decomposition of Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia was created after World War I by President Woodrow Wilson and his allies at Versailles as an ill-conceived conglomeration of Balkan nations freed by the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires. Serbia, which had been liberated from the Turks, had an uneasy coexistence until World War II, when it was conquered first by Nazi Germany and subsequently by Soviet-backed communists. The latter liquidated the non-communist, anti-Nazi resistance and superimposed communism. Following the

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fall of the Iron Curtain and the death of long-time premier Marshal Tito, the decomposition commenced.

Today, Yugoslavia is a fraction of its former domain, comprising the republics of Serbia (which includes the Kosovo region) and Montenegro. Croatia, Slovenia, and Macedonia have seceded. Under the current truce, Bosnia-Herzegovina is a federation of the Republic of Srpska and the Muslim-Croat enclaves demanded by the United States. Yugoslavia, as constructed by the communists, was to be the consummate multicultural nation, cemented by the fraternal bonds of socialism. But Yugoslavia failed to forge these bonds, ending instead in a savage war between ethnic rivals, primarily because communism could never progress beyond socialist seizure of industry and commerce. Private ownership of homes and property continued, social regimentation never supplanted families, and citizens maintained their religious faith. The people of Yugoslavia refused allegiance to a nation formed with the objective of supplanting their values.

Today in Bosnia-Herzegovina, we find an uneasy truce being policed by the United Nations under U.S. hegemony. This truce was prescribed by the Dayton Accords after the United States armed the Croatians and the Muslims and bombed the Serbs' key installations. One effect of the war was the displacement of refugees from ethnically mixed communities. While tragic, this does present the opportunity to resettle these refugees along the ethnic lines they prefer, removing the continuing irritant of intermingled peoples who are not likely to live peacefully together. Unfortunately, the United States is backing the return of refugees and the goal—once again—of a multicultural state.

The United States has demonized the Serbs for "ethnic cleansing" in Bosnia, which is what all three parties—Serbs, Croats, and Muslims—were effectively practicing. With roughly equal casualties, all were equally victims. Yet the Serbs have accepted the most refugees, mainly because they are the only ones who do not persecute those of mixed ethnic marriage or descent. The crowning irony is that the United States is propping up Slobodan Milosevic, a former communist who has undertaken neither privatization nor free elections, and who was one of the original belligerents. In the American view, Milosevic now is "cooperative."

Perhaps the best lesson that Americans can learn from Yugoslavia is that there is no such thing as a multicultural nation. Certainly what has made the United States a great nation is its cultural heritage. The talents which immigrants brought to America from various cultures blossomed in the context of our culture.

We are a product of Western civilization and Christianity, both of which evolved in Europe. Our own derivation of this civilization emphasizes individual rights and responsibility, strong family bonds, limited representative government, religion separated from state, a strong sense of community, free enterprise, private property, the rule of law and reason, and a common language with which we communicate this cultural heritage. To be an American citizen (or, as an immigrant, to aspire to be one) is to join these cultural bonds, not import alternatives. The only real alternative is the eventual dissolution of America—which, if history is any guide, will likely occur under conditions of savage hostility.

Specifically instructive are the circumstances in Kosovo and Muslim Bosnia. Kosovo is the heartland of Orthodox Serbia. Today the region is predominantly peopled by Albanian Muslims, the result of immigration from Albania and victory in a war of reproduction. The Albanians have retained the language, customs, and religion of their mother country, and most observers agree that Kosovo will eventually be annexed by Albania. At the rate that the Muslims are reproducing, Bosnia will soon find that Muslims have replaced the Orthodox Serbs as the majority. Not surprisingly, the Muslims want a strong central government for the confederation they soon will dominate.

There is a lesson here that those of us who live close to our national border should heed. Texas was effectively annexed by Americans whose language and culture were alien to Mexicans. Today, Texas has a reverse demographic shift due to immigration and reproduction, and our politicians are pandering to the Hispanic constituency by *encouraging* the preservation of a foreign language and culture.

Although most Hispanics, both native-born and immigrants, want to be integrated into American society, "Anglo" politicians play on their gut feelings of nationalism and downplay the importance of proficiency in the English language, both of which will limit their social and economic progress. Over the long term, this could lead to an increased desire for separatism and a reversal of allegiance to our country.

The government which governs culture least, governs best. But to the extent that government gets involved in culture through the schooling and assimilation of immigrants, the vast majority of American citizens want our government to defend not some multicultural alternative, but rather our cultural heritage and the borders which guarantee the peace and prosperity this heritage has created. That same vast majority, including the vast majority of Hispanics, strongly oppose the imposition of a multicultural America by a self-appointed cultural elite.

David Hartman is the chairman of the board of directors of The Rockford Institute.

FILM

The Face of Battle

by Wayne Allensworth

Saving Private Ryan

Produced by Steven Spielberg
Directed by Steven Spielberg
Screenplay by Robert Rodat
Released by Paramount and DreamWorks SKG

If you visit the American cemeteries near the beaches at Normandy—there are two of them—you may pick up a booklet describing the landings of June 6, 1944, as I did over 15 years ago. Under the listing for "Omaha," the anonymous historian wrote that

> the 1st U.S. Infantry Division landed here from 6.30 . . . however, there was a rough sea at the foot of the cliffs. The first assault suffered heavy losses . . . the beach had not been cleared of anti-invasion devices, and the tide was rising. . . . A few assault groups reached the top of the beach. . . . The Pointe du

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> Hoc was climbed and captured by 225 Rangers. . . . This was the most difficult of the landings.

I study these words as I walk across the Colleville-St-Laurent cemetery on a surprisingly blustery summer day, overcast and damp. The cemetery is the final resting place of some 9,386 Americans killed in the battle for Normandy, and the debris of war—obstacles set up by Rommel to impede an invasion and the pill boxes on the summit of Pointe du Hoc—is still there, jutting from the sand and the stone like bizarre post-modern sculptures. Descending to the beach and walking in the direction of the Ranger assault at Pointe du Hoc, I discover that the water is numbingly cold and that the heights above the beach gave the Germans the deadly high ground. A "difficult" landing. "Heavy losses."

The white crosses at Colleville-St-Laurent, punctuated by a Star of David here and there, are spread across a striking green sward, enclosed by trees and backing up to a monument and a simple stone wall. It is the wall I've come for. The 19-year-old sergeant I pay homage to is not interred here, or anywhere. I snap a picture of the inscription. All that is left is a shudder as I recall the grief of a Gold Star mother who never quite got over the loss of her eldest son. My namesake. I feel a mixture of sorrow and envy. The picture of the war most of us have is the bloodless epic of *The Longest Day* or the episodic drama of the old *Combat* TV series. The Last Good War. Dudley Doright Meets the Waffen SS. But a visit here taps us on our mental shoulders to let us know that it wasn't like that. It wasn't like anything we—the ones who weren't there or someplace like it—have ever known.

Saving Private Ryan is the film for which Steven Spielberg will probably be most remembered. Watching *Ryan*, the audience has its consciousness jolted and its understanding of war deepened. The film's first 25 minutes are an exhausting and exhilarating depiction of the Omaha landing. A storm of fire and death greets the GIs as the door of the landing craft drops. Men drown, weighed down by equipment in the chilling waters, and the audience is pulled from the comfort of the theater by a dreadful assault on the senses. Blood and body parts, screams and shouts, and unbelievable bravery make up the terrifying mosaic of *Ryan*'s Omaha sequence.

There is in this film sorrow and callousness, heroism and cowardice, fear and the comradeship that only a closely knit group of men in dire circumstances feels. The cast—led by Tom Hanks as Captain John Miller, a Pennsylvania school teacher dropped into the unlikely role of leader of men in the deadly maneuvers of war; Tom Sizemore as Sergeant Horvath; Edward Burns as Private Reiben; and Matt Damon as the elusive Iowa farm boy, Private James Francis Ryan—pulls off a remarkably natural portrayal of young men bound by fate and uncommon love, spurred on by the heightened sensory experience of war, deprivation, and sudden death. Miller and his men are given an unlikely mission: find and save young Ryan, whose three brothers have been killed. General Marshall, portrayed by Harve Presnell, has given the order: Mrs. Ryan will not lose her only remaining son.

Spielberg, the proverbial Hollywood liberal (a breed not renowned for its love of Middle America), is paying tribute to the sons of Boise and Brooklyn and Birmingham for the awful sacrifice they made. To set the tone, Spielberg pays homage to John Ford's *The Searchers*, while noting the landscape of a most American director's *The Grapes of Wrath*: As Mrs. Ryan is notified of the loss of three sons, she is framed in a farmhouse door, looking out on stretches of amber waves of grain, while she is approached by the messenger from one side, a preacher from the other. Some conservatives have already attacked the film for not glorifying the war, for stressing the horrors of war over its sometime necessity, perhaps for being anti-American, but the audience's empathy for the characters is excited precisely because these are *American* boys facing those horrors: *Ryan*'s GIs are not speechifying flag wavers, but common men who have set out to do a dirty job. Of course they love their country and feel a sense of duty, and Spielberg has chosen to portray that patriotism in their reminiscing about home, loved ones, and the simple beauty of their common lives. But war means fighting, and fighting means killing. *Ryan*'s GIs mow down the enemy with brutal abandon and take reprisals against a disarmed German who has killed a buddy. The squad's Jewish member taunts German prisoners. These are the normal reflexes of war, and it is about time they were honestly portrayed. Perhaps those who pass for conservatives in the late 1990's, who seem to like war, any war, could learn a thing or two by reviewing the thinking of some of their forefathers, who saw things differently.

Others see *Ryan* as yet another Hollywood attack on Christianity. While it is obvious to any thinking person that the Hollywood of the 1990's is hardly friendly to the Christian faith, it is also painful to observe how squeamish conservative Christians have become. No, *Ryan*'s Christians would not be model members of any organization dreamed up by Ralph Reed. Jackson, the unit's sniper, is a dead-on impersonation of what any white Southerner would readily recognize as a type as old as the republic: Jackson is Sergeant York. As he sets the sights of his rifle, Jackson recites the 144th Psalm: "Blessed be the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight . . . my deliverer; my shield, and he in whom I trust." It has been a long time since Christians had

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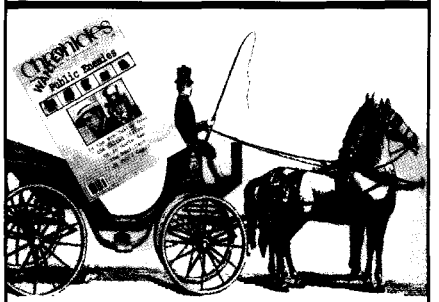

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that kind of faith.

The question that *Ryan* gets at—why do men sacrifice themselves?—is something more important than jingoism, something more elemental than the often superficial patriotic gore of filmdom, and something today's conservatives are trying hard to forget, which just may be why we are losing our country. The film's final, bloody sequence is reminiscent of Sam Peckinpah's *The Wild Bunch*. *Ryan*'s GIs are faced with a difficult moral situation—again, something today's conservatives often have trouble with—as they question the sense of the mission they are on. Why risk eight lives—six of which will be lost—to save one, and why this one? ("I have a mother too," quips one of *Ryan*'s dogfaces.)

Ultimately, *Ryan* is about redemption and brotherhood. Like Peckinpah's outlaws, the men of *Ryan* have killed much, often instinctively, without thinking. Tom Hanks' Captain Miller reflects that he has necessarily rationalized killing as a means of saving lives: "Our objective is to win the war," snaps Miller, and, by implication, to end it. But "every man I've killed" takes "me further away" from home, from humanity. Ryan must be saved, says Tom Sizemore's Sergeant Horvath, because we are here and it may be "the one decent thing"—like the outlaws' decision to save the captured Angel even if they must all die trying—to come out of this war. In the end, *Ryan*'s GIs fight for redemption (an idea that Christians should see as positive; all of us, even heroes, who have taken on the deadly burden of duty, are in need of grace) and brotherhood. Once the decision is made—Ryan must be saved—they will fight to the end. Loyalty, friendship, kinship, the bonds of shared experience—these are the causes conservatives once rallied to, the only causes that are worth the hell fire of war. Unlike stock-market quotes, they cannot be rationalized or calculated. They have little to do with the "national interests" of the state. There is no cost-benefit analysis that can explain the Alamo or Omaha Beach.

If mainstream conservatives can benefit from reflections on *Ryan*'s moral conundrums, liberals, who seem to take joy in spitting on Middle America, should pause a moment to reflect on the legacy of the Omaha Beach generation. The men who stormed the beaches were white, mostly Christians, from working or middle class backgrounds. They defeated Hitler as well as the "supermen" fanatics of the SS, and liberated the death camps. Their collective conscience reacted to blacks' pleas for decency at home. Their culture made this country prosperous, and the Constitution is written in their language. If the liberals and professional victims persist in calling us, the sons and daughters of that generation, "fascists" or "brownshirts" (as one liberal senator called Pat Buchanan's backers during the 1996 campaign), then they should be forewarned: Some of us are not prepared to see the sacrifice of a generation squandered, nor the country they built given away without a fight. War is hell.

Wayne Allensworth, who writes from Purcellville, Virginia, is the author of The Russian Question: Nationalism, Modernization, and Post-Communist Russia *(Rowman & Littlefield).*

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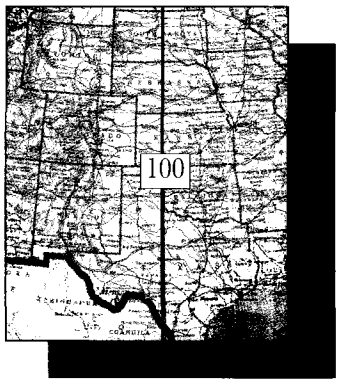
The Hundredth Meridian

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Twenty Years and Counting

I have lived now in the West 20 years, two years past the age of liability for military service (if there were a Western States of America, and if they had a draft) and one year short of my political majority and the suffrage. Although you can have spent half a century living in a small town in the rural West and still be considered an outsider if you arrived there from someplace else at the age of 20, the truth is, if 20 years don't make a Westerner, nothing will. What, then, *is* a Westerner? According to my definition, he is simply a person who cannot imagine living anywhere *but* the West, even if he should be compelled, for economic or other reasons, to do so.

"Why go into the desert?" Ed Abbey asked. "The Great American Desert is an awful place. . . . Even if you survive, which is not certain, you will have a miserable time. The desert is for movies and God-intoxicated mystics, not for family recreation." Why, for that matter, go into the West at all? The leached and ruined towns, the sprawling, congested, modernistic, mechanized, militarized cities, hideous to look at; the arid lands, hundreds of thousands of square miles of cactus, creosote, and sagebrush, overlooked by the "shining" mountains, in reality bastions of naked rock and ice surrounded by gloomy, inhospitable subarctic forest inhabited by grizzly bears, mountain lions, and Sasquatches; the climate, roaring hot in the Southwest and cold enough to freeze molecular action in the North; the human population, divided between people (the native Westerners) who don't read books and others (environmentalists, mostly) who read the wrong ones; in the hinterland, the lack of employment and of nubile, unmarried women; the neglect and contempt of the East, where Significant People live, and the consequent near-impossibility of finding place and preferment (you can't share a power lunch via your computer); isolation, separation, and loneliness, much as on the frontier in pioneer days. . . . Every small Western town I know of has people like me and my friends in it, people who would be objectively happier—richer and more



powerful, better connected, professionally more advanced, married and with a family, even—had they chosen to settle somewhere else, or simply stayed put where they were raised, back East or on the West Coast. All of these people—including me—have no sensible or even plausible reason for sticking it in the West, and yet we *do* stick it. We just can't imagine living anywhere else.

There are times when it seems almost possible. The close green hills of New England, the open rolling parks of Virginia, the rich Mississippi Delta bordered by piney hills on the east and to the west the tangled, snakey bottoms of the great river, the blue-green, level horizon of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, watery and pale like a painting in oils overthinned by turpentine—a visit to any one of these places and others is capable of creating an illusion of choice in the heart of the dedicated Westerner, native or transplant. But it doesn't last. Returning home to pack his stuff, he looks at the country around him and decides he just can't do it. He knew it hundreds of miles ago, in fact, crossing the Missouri River at 33,000 feet or catching sight of Chimney Rock from Highway 92 southeast of Scottsbluff, Nebraska. For goners like us the West is a fever, a sickness we must suffer from in order to be fully alive. That is to say, it is a form of dependency, an addiction made freely accessible to the American people only as the result of an oversight attributable to scientific ignorance on the part of the same primeval FDA that missed its chance to criminalize coffee and beef. One whiff of pungent sagebrush or the astringent alkali dust, a glimpse of distant mountains, snow-covered, beyond the velvet plain or a solitary, century-old cottonwood tree trailing green foliage about its fluted gray trunk, a rustbound windmill with its pinwheel jammed standing above a battered stock tank, or simply the endless border of yellow clover, dancing on a steady wind where the asphalt meets the gravel shoulder of the two-lane highway—and it's over, the breakout thwarted once again. The Westerner isn't going anywhere, and he knows it. Except to throw a saddle and pack on the Appaloosa and ride into the mountains for the night. Or take the rifle from the gun rack in the pickup and shoot a buck antelope at 300 yards after stalking him for two hours on the prairie. Or maybe just drive 70 or 80 miles round-trip to the nearest saloon where they have a sign tacked to the backbar saying HELEN WAITE IS OUR CREDIT MANAGER, IF YOU WANT CREDIT GO TO HELEN WAITE and all the women are married to friends or relatives of yours. Not that that ever stopped anyone, necessarily.

A postcard in my possession shows a pickup truck photographed head on and four individuals in the cab: the driver on the left side of the truck, another young man on the right, and, between them on the seat, two large dogs. On the back of the card is the printed caption "Double-dating in Montana" and two inscribed messages, in different hands. The first and briefer of these says, "Chilton—is it really this bad?" The author is a friend and colleague in Michigan. The other, obviously written by a woman, I may not print—no gentleman ever reads another's mail, much less publishes it—except for the signature, "Jane & Ted." Since my Michigan friend is an active environmentalist (in addition to being a well-known advocate of restricted immigration), I am able to make an informed guess at the identity of the undersigned couple, living part-time in Montana. To reply to his question, however, the answer is, "No—not quite." But almost. The American West is about isolation, and the contemplation of loneliness. That is its fascination, and has been for seven or eight generations of the American people—not those who experienced the West only through books and newspapers, of course, but the ones who lived it, breathed it, and had their being in it,

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from Jim Bridger and Joe Walker through John Muir, Charles Ingalls (Laura Wilder's father), Theodore Roosevelt (even Teddy, who had to tear himself finally from its near-fatal allure to fulfill a more glorious destiny in Washington, D.C.), Aldo Leopold, Mary Austin, Zane Grey, Wallace Stegner, and Ed Abbey, to name a few West-intoxicated souls known to history. The same goes, however, for hundreds of thousands of anonymous hard-scrabble mountain men, hunters, guides, miners, powder-monkeys, saddle-stiffs, lumberjacks, roughnecks, sheepherders, and ranchers—maybe even unpublished writers, who knows?—who stayed on in the Mountain West long after their hopes of achieving any substantial accomplishment or reward had been dashed. (It does *not* go for environmentalists, who are fiercely tribal themselves and herd their women the way bull elk guard their harems.) "Looking at this country makes me so lonely I want to cry," the wife of a friend of mine from western New York State remarked 20 years ago, when Jack Mootz and I were roughnecking together in the oilpatch around Kemmerer, Wyoming. Western space, the spread of the vast landscape and the sky, affects many people that way. "I am an easterner," Robert Kaplan of the *Atlantic Monthly* has written,

> with an easterner's sensory prejudices. In the eastern United States, the shorter distances between towns, the huddled-together hills, the heavy humid air, and the ranks of tall trees that partially block the view ahead and the sky above contract the landscape, so that every curve in the road brings a new surprise, a new chapter in a developing story. In the southwest, though, everything is far away and the earth is naked of tree cover. The dry, thin air of these high plateaus expands the view and the sky, so that everything is seen at once; there are no developing chapters, no narrative: just an all-encompassing monotone where one strip-mall town follows another.

For the Westerner, the nakedness, the thinness, the encompassment, the distance that makes a window onto a dimension beyond narrative are what is compelling in the Western landscape—and the tight-stretched, omnipresent sky with several kinds of weather going on in it. Though the space is real, the emptiness is illusory, and the loneliness, while real enough, is actually lonesomeness, an affirmation of the final unimportance of being lonely and also of the opportunities it offers. The Westerner doesn't look into the far distance and see fear and abandonment and nothingness; instead he sees openness, endlessness, and the possibility that comes with being able to see forever—the chance for contemplation, as the Catholic existentialist Walker Percy saw when visiting New Mexico as a young man. What makes the big Western cities terrible is their social, cultural, and aesthetic underdevelopment, unredeemed by closeness with the natural world they have set at a distance by smog, strip malls, and suburbanization, and the car culture. In his affluent, shiny new city with its distantly picturesque setting, the urban Westerner suffers an aloneness that, having no lonesomeness in it, is the greatest loneliness—loneliness of the modern, shut-in, solipsistic variety.

Escaping the city of Las Cruces, New Mexico—a spreading cloaca of fake adobe houses and collapsing real ones, vacant lots strewn with broken glass, shopping plazas, car lots, Lotaburger and Pizza Hut, ATMs, health clubs, shut-up boxing clubs, IHOP, student apartments, on-off ramps, two converging interstates, flood-control dams, trailer parks, gas stations, golf courses, government buildings like warehouses, public schools like penitentiaries, and housing developments rising out of the valley of the Rio Grande to overspread the mesas on either side—I drove north by the river road to Hatch and southwest from there on the cutoff to Deming, around the northern end of the Sierra de las Uvas, or Grape Mountains. The mountains were a uniform brown in October, the plain below them lion-colored. The highway topped a hill, and I saw ahead, 20 miles away across the vast desert, the Matterhorn snag of Cooke's Peak rising from the purple folds of the sere brown mountains. The road was fenced on both sides beyond the right-of-way, and in the distance were trees surrounding what looked like cattle sheds, the corrugated iron roofing glinting in the fall sun. In the paler region of the sky, between dome and landline, something else flickered intermittently in the sunlight: a gathering cloud of discrete particles drifting downward and narrowing as it went, like smoke flowing back into a chimney. I drove until I was abreast of the place and stopped on the shoulder of the highway, 250 yards from the desert stock pond where the birds were alighting. A hundred or so of them were already down and resting beside the water in which a few stood cooling their feet. I stepped from the truck to glass them through binoculars, tall gray and brown birds with square red caps, curving long necks, and longer legs: sandhill cranes on their migration southward from Canada, Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming to Mexico.

From where I stood I could hear their gravelly croaking as they called the rest of the flock in. High overhead birds kept materializing in flights out of the blue where, a few seconds before, there had been no birds, only their distant calls. Five and six or eight at a time they appeared, descending in spirals that seemed slow but put them on the ground in under a minute, their spread feet trailing at the end of the hanging legs, wings curved to cup the air, pale undersides gleaming against the black edging that ended in discrete black primary feathers gripping the air like strong fingers. Down they came, dropping along steep planes of air until, several feet above the ground yet, they braked themselves with three or four strong wing flaps and made a precise landing among their standing friends. There were a couple of hundred birds at least beside the water and still the cries came from the sky, more birds appeared, circled, descended, landed, encouraged by those on the ground sounding their strange supernatural cries. Once down they stood close together, 300 or more facing all in the same direction and paying no attention to me or the sporadic traffic passing on the highway. The resting flock appeared weary but not exhausted, and I wondered whether the pond were a waystop for them or whether they had chosen to spend the night in this place arranged for their convenience by merciful Providence in the person of a remote, unaware cattle rancher.

I waited until the last of the birds were down before putting up the field glasses and driving on across empty desert toward the Cooke's Range turning blue as the afternoon sun edged behind it. Thinking *That's why I stay in the West. It's why we all do.*

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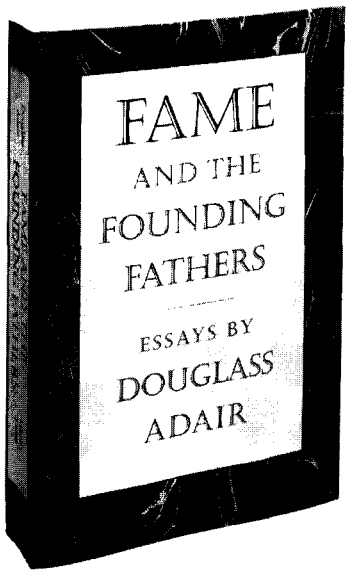

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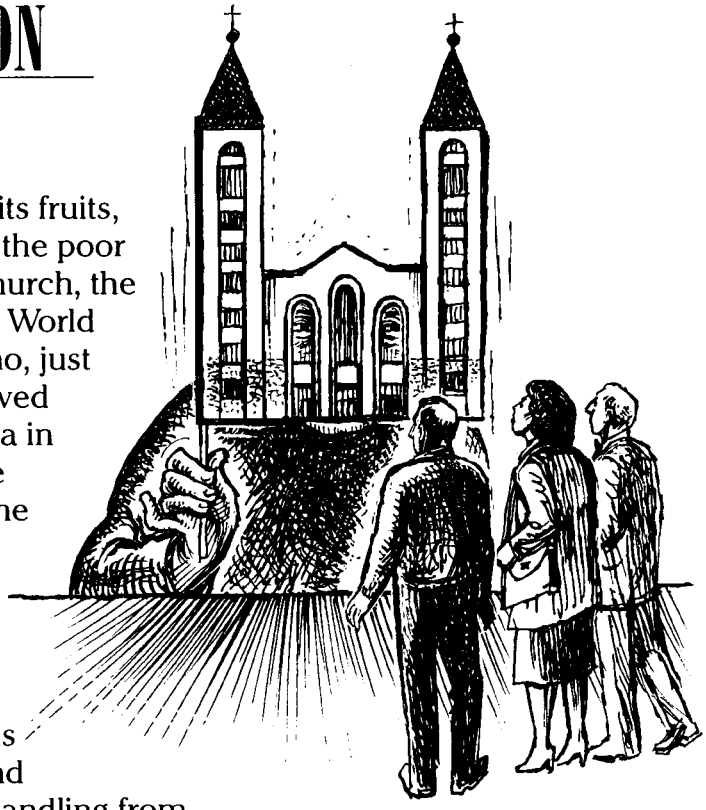
THE MEDJUGORJE DECEPTION



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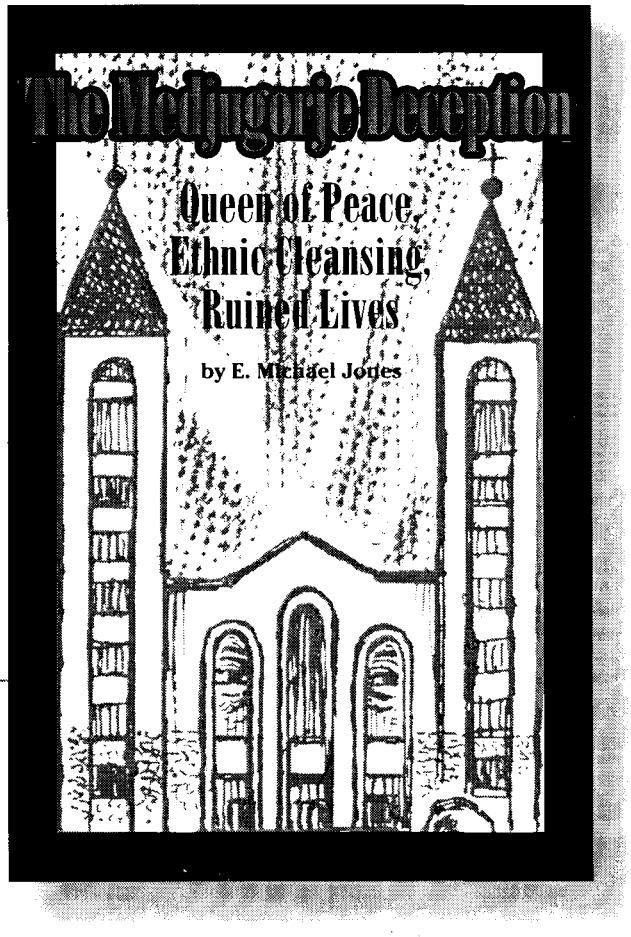

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